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ABSTRACT

In 1988, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, a research team from the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University began a study of the origin, development, and diffusion of the Public Library Association's (PLA) planning and evaluation manuals. The study was intended to add to the general understanding of the means by which information about administrative innovations is currently disseminated among the nation's small- and medium-sized public libraries. For the first part of the study, researchers used telephone interviews, supplemented by published and archival records, to produce a narrative description of PLA's development and dissemination activities, and to compare these activities to the theoretical diffusion models that are found in the general literature on change and innovation. The second part of the study consisted of a mail survey of 48 state library development agencies and a nationwide mail survey of a random sample of 626 public libraries serving populations under 50,000. Major findings indicate that library size is less directly related to adoption of the innovation than was expected. It is suggested that the diffusion of managerial innovations among small- and medium-sized libraries is largely influenced by the extent to which library directors can utilize multiple channels of access to information about innovations. (SD)

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Final Report

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December 1989

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Major funding for this research was provided by the U.S. Department of Education, under the Library Research and Demonstration Program. Additional funding was provided through the Indiana University Office of Research and the Graduate School. The authors are responsible for the opinions expressed in the concluding chapter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 1980, the Public Library Association (PLA) introduced its first planning manual, *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*. Two years later, *Output Measures for Public Libraries* was published. Through the early 1980s, PLA conducted a major promotion and dissemination effort in an attempt to wean public librarians away from a dependence on national minimum standards (which will no longer be published), encouraging them instead to engage in community based long range planning and evaluation of services.

Even as the manuals were being disseminated, the association was starting to work on revisions. In 1987, new editions of the manuals were made available to the public library community under the collective title "The Public Library Development Program" (PLDP). This innovation, which began as a grassroots attempt by a small group within PLA to confront and respond to social and economic changes, has resulted in a continuing effort by PLA to promote a substantive change in the thinking and managerial

approach of public librarians. If it does indeed lead to the general acceptance of a new model of public librarianship, the PLDP will have created a major transformation in a societal institution that has remained largely unchanged since it was founded in the mid-1850s.

Purpose of the Study

In 1988, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, a research team from the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University began a study of the origin, development, and diffusion of PLA's planning and evaluation manuals. The broad purpose of the study was to add to the general understanding of the means through which information about administrative innovations is currently being disseminated among the nation's small and medium-sized public libraries (defined in the study as those serving fewer than 50,000 people). Through an investigation of the development and diffusion of the PLDP, much can be learned about how to improve information delivery to public librarians and to facilitate continuing education among the members of this diverse group.

Study Methods

The Public Library Association, as developer and disseminator of the innovation on the national level, was a focal point of the study. On the state level, the dissemination roles and activities assumed by state library development agencies were explored. Finally, the study examined the extent to which local public libraries had received and were utilizing the information about PLA's planning techniques that were coming from the other two levels.

There were two distinct parts to the study: (1) an exploration of the change agent role of PLA and (2) an examination of diffusion and adoption activities occurring at the state and local levels. For the first part of the study, the researchers used telephone interviews, supplemented by published and archival records, in order to produce a narrative description of PLA's development and dissemination activities, and to compare these activities to the theoretical diffusion models that are found in the general literature on change and innovation.

The second part of the study consisted of (1) a mail survey of 48 state library development agencies and (2) a nationwide mail survey of a random sample, stratified by size, of 626 public libraries that serve populations of under 50,000.

Statistical techniques used in the study included item analysis, t-tests of differences between means, multiple regression analysis and one-way analysis of variance.

Major Findings

The development and diffusion activities of PLA form a complex but fascinating pattern. They occurred over a long period of time and had a number of important antecedents. When compared with theoretical diffusion models, PLA's interactions with the government sector, the education and research communities, and practicing public librarians during the origination and development stages, as well as the dissemination techniques it used, can be said to most closely approximate the "Linkage" model of knowledge dissemination and utilization. A number of specific linking roles were identified as being played by the developers and disseminators of the innovation. There were people who "conveyed" or transferred knowledge from the research community to PLA members and to librarians in the field who were seeking solutions to change related problems. There were "consultants" who helped PLA to identify the planning techniques from other disciplines that could be adapted to the public library environment. There were "trainers" who conducted workshops; "leaders" who served to influence the opinions of others; "innovators" who initiated the search for solutions and brought new concepts into discussions. There were those who served as "defenders" of the interests of smaller libraries; and "knowledge builders" who were the goal setters and visionaries. Many people assumed different linkage roles at different times, remaining with the project as it evolved over the years.

There was a heavy dependence upon the journal literature not only to introduce and explain the innovation itself, but also to "re-educate" public librarians with respect to their viewpoints toward the usefulness of national standards, and the concept of involving users in the planning and evaluation of library services.

PLA hoped to enlist the help of state library agencies in the dissemination of both the planning process manual and the PLDP. It saw its role as that of "training the trainers" (state agency consultants), who would then go out and convert librarians in the field. PLA discovered that forging such a partnership with the library development agencies was not an easy task. Through a mail survey, the study examined the perspective of these state agencies on PLA's innovation and the extent to which they are currently involved in the diffusion process.

Thirty-six state agencies (75 percent) responded to the survey. Those that took an active dissemination role used similar methods to disseminate information about *A Planning Process* (APP) and its successor, *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries* (PRSM). Eighty percent provided consultant visits to encourage adoption of APP, while 90 percent reported that they used this method to promote PRSM. Articles in state library journals, regional conferences, and workshops conducted by state agency staff were used by over half of the agencies. Fifty percent of the states are requiring

public libraries to include selected output measures in annual statistical reports.

Forty percent of the state agencies reported that they place a "somewhat high" priority on encouraging public librarians to learn and use formal planning techniques, while 37 percent consider this a "high" priority, and 9 percent consider it a "top" priority.

Promotion of planning appears as a written goal or objective in the long-range plans of 48 percent of the agencies. While only 26 percent decided to undertake a significant diffusion role with regard to *A Planning Process,* 49 percent have decided on such a role in connection with its successor.

While the public library survey had a return rate of 52 percent, only 47 percent (298) were usable. Of these, 26 percent indicated that they were unaware of the manuals; 31 percent were aware and interested; an additional 31 percent were at some stage of adoption/implementation; and 12 percent were at other stages in the diffusion process. When graphed, the rate of adoption of PLA's innovation between 1980 and 1989 approximates the S-shaped diffusion curve found in other studies.

The findings suggested that library size (defined as "population served") is less directly related to adoption of the innovation than was expected. Significant differences were found between libraries serving populations below 10,000 and those serving between 10,000 and 50,000 people on "access to information" about the planning manuals, but there were no significant differences between these two groups with respect to implementation of either planning manual. Library size was shown to have an influence on the number of association committees that the director was involved in, but not in the number of conferences that the director attended.

Item analysis of the several scales developed in the study for the purpose of measuring "access to information" and "implementation" of the planning manuals produced Cronbach's alpha coefficients in the .80 to .97 range, indicating high estimates of reliability. Other scales were in the low to moderate range with regard to estimates of their reliability. These included "access to the journal literature" by library directors and "dissemination methods" used by state agencies. Because of the low obtained reliability coefficients, investigations of the relationships between these variables and the adoption of the manuals were not conducted.

Two research hypotheses were tested in the study:

> H_1: As state agencies begin to assume a more significant role in dissemination, public libraries will tend to implement more facets of the innovation (that is, they will score higher on the implementation scale); and

H_2: Adoption is related to the size of the library, access to information about the manuals, and the director's professional involvement.

The one-way analysis of variance that was used to test the first hypothesis found significant differences in the extent to which public libraries implemented PRSM between states whose development agencies assumed no dissemination role and those whose agencies assumed a significant role, and between states whose agencies assumed a limited role and those whose agencies assumed a significant role. There was no significant difference between implementation scores in states playing no dissemination role and those playing a limited role. This indicated that the diffusion role assumed by the state will have an influence on adoption behavior, but only if the role is substantial, rather than one that is limited to the provision of information only.

Although we found that access to information and attendance at conferences can explain some 50 percent of the variance in implementation scores, library size and other variables related to the director's involvement in the profession were not found to have a significant influence. Therefore the test provided no support for our research hypothesis concerning size of library and the director's professional involvement.

The study supported the assumption that theoretical models of the general process of developing and diffusing an innovation can be useful in conducting empirical studies of innovation in public libraries. It suggested that the diffusion of managerial innovations among small and medium sized public libraries is largely influenced by the extent to which the directors of such libraries are able to utilize multiple channels for *access to information* about innovations.

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Chapter I

Overview and Review of the Literature

INTRODUCTION

Almost from its beginnings, the public library has attempted to be "all things to all people." Even small libraries with limited resources tend to identify their purpose as encompassing the provision of educational, informational, recreational, and cultural materials and services to all residents of their communities. This broad purpose was and remains an impossible mission. Yet the custom has persisted over the years of aimlessly adding new services with little attention paid to establishing priorities among existing functions.[1]

Institutional Standards

Until the mid-1960s, public librarians were generally guided in their decision making by traditional practices and national institutional standards. Such quantitative, minimum standards, based on size of population served, had been issued through the American Library Association periodically since 1933. Despite complaints that minimum standards, arrived at arbitrarily, were inappropriate as planning tools, many directors of smaller public libraries were accustomed to using them in lobbying for budget increases and as a convenient means of comparing their institutions with what they assumed was the national norm. They knew of no other way to measure the success of what they were doing. In fact, even directors of libraries that far exceeded the standards made it a practice to gather statistics from libraries serving a comparably-sized population when they wanted to evaluate their services.

Passage of the federal Library Services Act (LSA) in 1956 marked the beginning of a decade or more of growth and expansion for public libraries. An unprecedented infusion of funding in the 1960s under the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) allowed library services to be extended into rural areas, encouraged the rapid growth of nonfiction book collections and the development of audio-visual collections, led to programs that demonstrated the viability of

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[1] Robert Ellis Lee. *Continuing Education for Adults through the American Public Library, 1833-1964* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1966) p. 42.

targeting services toward the urban disadvantaged, and resulted in new or enlarged facilities for numerous public libraries.

By the mid-1970s, the national economic picture had changed as federal funding began to shrink. Soon local governments were forced to institute austerity budgets in an attempt to curb the nation's high inflation rate. The country entered the 1980s with an emphasis on retrenchment and fiscal conservatism, rather than experimentation and expansion.

Out of this economic environment there emerged a growing concern that public libraries would not fare well unless they learned to compete more aggressively for their share of dwindling local tax monies. Trustees and librarians were finding that they could no longer take for granted the public's willingness to provide automatic annual budget increases geared to the rising costs of materials and services.

In the past, appeals based on meeting national standards and centering on the *needs of the library*–for more books, more personnel, or more space--had succeeded reasonably well. Then, the public began to demand institutional accountability in concrete, rather than vague, terms. Public libraries were called upon to demonstrate anew the value of their resources and services. The focus began to shift to the *needs of the local community*, and to the specific ways in which the library could help meet those needs.

Community Needs

The emphasis on accountability to taxpayers prompted some public librarians to reexamine their institution's fundamental aims and to seek new methods for evaluating the library's services. The focus on meeting community rather than institutional needs made it evident that there were a number of drawbacks to the practice of depending upon national standards for guidance and as tools for assessing performance. "More than one library worked hard to come up to the standards, proceeded to achieve them, and then realized that they still were not giving the community what it needed."[2]

When the time came to revise the 1966 standards, the committee within the Public Library Association (PLA) that was charged with the task decided that a totally different approach was needed in order to transform the public library from a so-called nineteenth-century institution into one that will more successfully address the needs of an information and learning society. Its solution to the problem of societal change was that each public library should determine--based on its knowledge of the local community–its own individual mission, goals, and objectives. As no two communities are exactly alike, no two public libraries

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[2] Lowell Martin, "Library Planning and Library Standards: Historical Perspective," *Bookmark* 39 (Summer 1981): 256.

should be exactly alike with respect to their primary function in the community. Instead of providing public libraries with prescriptive, institutional standards, PLA decided that it should encourage public librarians to adopt formal planning techniques that would allow them to set their own local standards by which to assess their performance.

Public Library Planning Process

Because few public librarians were skilled in long range planning, PLA contracted with a private research firm to develop and test a do-it-yourself manual instructing librarians in how to form a planning committee with community participation; how to conduct a community needs assessment; how to go about collecting and analyzing data; how to set priorities, goals, and objectives; and how to implement strategies for change.[3] The planning manual was published in 1980. Two years later a companion volume was published that consisted of standardized performance or "output" measures that could be gathered by each library for use as baseline measurements in developing its local standards of service.[4]

Diffusion of the Planning Process

Even before the planning manuals were published, PLA began an unprecedented information and continuing education project as it embarked on the process of disseminating its planning techniques to as many of the nation's 8,900 public libraries as possible.

The enormity of the task PLA set for itself becomes apparent when one looks more closely at public library statistics. Ninety percent of public libraries serve communities of fewer than 50,000 people. Of these, 71 percent serve populations of under 10,000, with annual budgets of under $50,000.[5] The majority of these smaller libraries are directed by individuals with no formal library education. These libraries cannot afford to belong to the American Library Association (of which PLA is a division), nor can they afford to participate in association conferences. Often, available finances will not allow subscriptions to professional journals that cannot also double as selection sources. As a result, librarians in smaller institutions are isolated and have few opportunities for direct

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[3] Vernon E. Palmour, et al., *A Planning Process for Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980).

[4] Douglas L. Zweizig and Eleanor Jo Rodger, *Output Measures for Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1982).

[5] Donald J. Sager, "Research Report on the American Public Library" (Dublin, OH: OCLC Office of research, 1982), p. 9.

contact with library developments on the national level. In 1982, there were an estimated 37,500 persons employed in professional positions in public libraries.[6] PLA's membership of 5,600 is less than 15 percent of this group, yet it functions as the group's national professional association.

Until the 1980s, the majority of public librarians, including those who were graduates of library science programs, seldom attempted to set goals and measurable objectives for their services. PLA's planning process represented a managerial innovation that would need to be diffused among a widely diverse and largely resistant group of librarians. Publication of the first planning manual was met with skepticism, not only from practitioners, but also from some state library agency consultants who were charged with encouraging public library development but believed that long range planning was beyond the capabilities of and the resources available to most of their constituent librarians.

Public Library Development Program

Despite resistance and controversy, PLA remained committed to the concept of community based planning and evaluation. Soliciting and paying heed to feedback from users of the planning process, PLA revised its manuals under the collective title "The Public Library Development Program" (PLDP). Complex procedures for collecting and analyzing data about the local community were eliminated; illustrative material and photographs were added, making the layout of the planning manual more appealing. The concept of role setting—narrowing the library's primary purpose and role in the community—was emphasized, and a step-by-step exercise on how to establish and prioritize roles was introduced. Also included in the Public Library Development Program was the design and implementation of a national computerized data service (PLDS). The intent was to provide comparative information (e.g., selected output measures, role choices, input data such as holdings and expenditures, and community analysis data) from public libraries across the country that had adopted the planning techniques.[7]

The process of disseminating information about the PLDP and promoting widespread adoption of planning and role setting is still continuing. PLA learned from its first experience and has reorganized and intensified its diffusion activities. There is still resistance from the field, but the concept of community based planning has begun to take hold. Several state library development

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[6] Mary Jo Lynch, *Libraries In an Information Society: A Statistical Summary* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1987), p. 30.

[7] *Planning & Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures*. Prepared for the Public Library Development Project by Charles R. McClure, et al. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1987), p. xii.

agencies are requiring that public libraries produce five-year plans of service as a condition to receipt of state aid. Some agencies are also providing continuing education in "how to plan" for librarians and trustees and are incorporating output measures into the statistics public librarians include in their annual reports to the state.

Long-Term Implications

PLDP is envisioned by its originators as an ongoing program devoted to the development and dissemination of tools and activities that will help public librarians in the areas of planning, measurement, and evaluation of services.[8] Of greater significance than the techniques themselves is the philosophic stance that led to their development: Public librarians should abandon attempts to maintain a "universal" mission appropriate to the concept of *the* public library as a societal institution. Rather, each agency should establish an individualized purpose consistent with the unique needs and characteristics of the local community.

Taken together, the PLDP's underlying rationale and recommended planning and evaluation techniques constitute a landmark event in the historical development of public libraries in the United States. The PLDP, which began as a grassroots attempt by a small group of individuals within PLA to confront and respond to social and economic changes, has resulted in a continuing effort by PLA to promote a substantive change in the thinking and managerial approach of public librarians. If it does indeed lead to the general acceptance of a new model of public librarianship, the PLDP will have created a major transformation in a societal institution that has remained largely unchanged since it was founded in the 1850s.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The study that is the focus of this report addressed the problem of documenting PLA's efforts to develop and diffuse its planning and evaluation techniques. Such documentation is needed for two reasons: (1) PLA's diffusion endeavor is unique, and a detailed examination of it should provide insights that will be useful in future attempts to disseminate information and innovations among public librarians; and (2) if the assumption is correct that the PLDP is signaling the beginning of a new phase in the history of the public library, it is important that we start now to monitor that transition and attempt to analyze the events and conditions that are shaping it. If a new pattern does not result,

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[8] ibid, p. xi.

however, an in-depth examination of the diffusion process should provide clues as to why such a change failed to occur even though many believe that conditions in society favor such a transition.

The Present Study

The broad purpose of this study is to add to the general understanding of the means through which information about administrative innovations is currently being disseminated among the nation's smaller public libraries. Through an investigation of the development and diffusion of PLDP, much can be learned about how to improve information delivery to public librarians and to facilitate the continuing education of this diverse professional group.

There are any number of theoretical models available that attempt to explain how an innovation originates and is diffused among organizations. This study used a model developed by Havelock[9] which suggests that the flow of knowledge within a service profession involves the linking of many change agents into a complex social system. Many senders and receivers are interconnected by such mechanisms as overlapping professional memberships, shared values, and established communication channels. The Havelock model includes several additional levels and many more linkages than it was possible to examine within the time frame and financial constraints of the study. Therefore, only parts of the Havelock model were applied.

The Public Library Association, as developer and disseminator of the innovation on the national level, was one of the focal points of the study. On the state level, the dissemination roles and activities assumed by library development agencies were explored. Finally, the study examined the extent to which local public libraries had received and were utilizing the information about PLA's planning techniques that might have been coming from the other two levels.

Exploratory Questions

A number of exploratory questions were addressed in the study. Those that related to the development and diffusion roles of PLA included the following:

1. Can specific linking roles be identified among the developers of the original planning process and of the PLDP?
2. What were the dissemination goals and objectives of PLA?

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[9] R. G. Havelock *Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Social Research, 1969).

3. What dissemination methods were used by PLA?
4. How did the objectives and methods used to disseminate the original planning process differ from those used with respect to the PLDP?

The following were among the questions that related to the dissemination activities of state library agencies:

1. When and how did the agency first become aware of PLA's planning process? of the PLDP?
2. What role, if any, did the agency assume in disseminating the planning process? the PLDP?
3. What methods, if any, did the agency use in disseminating the planning process? the PLDP?
4. What barriers and/or facilitators to adoption of the planning manuals can be identified by the agency?

The study looked at small and medium-sized public libraries (defined as those serving populations of less than 50,000) with respect to two broad questions:

1. Were they aware and, if so, when and how did they become aware, of PLA's planning process and of the PLDP?
2. What decision, if any, did they make about adopting and using the planning techniques?

One of the objectives of the study was to determine whether there is a direct relationship between the dissemination role and activities undertaken by a particular state agency and the extent to which the smaller libraries in that state are aware of and have adopted the planning manuals.

REPORT FORMAT

There are two distinct pieces to this study, each with specific objectives and each utilizing a different research method. This two-pronged approach was needed to meet the overall goals of the study. In order to allow each component of the study to be discussed in detail, the main body of the report is organized into two parts. The first part, discussed in Chapter 2, deals with the exploration of the change agent role of the Public Library Association. The second part, which is the subject of Chapter 3, focuses on the examination of diffusion and adoption activities occurring at the state and local levels.

Part I

The development and dissemination activities of the Public Library Association form a complex but extremely interesting pattern. They occurred over a long period of time and had a number of important antecedents. They involved a small corps of individuals who maintained a long term association with the project, playing different roles at different times. PLA's planning process activities were also conducted by people who came into the project briefly, played their part, and then moved on to other association responsibilities.

The exploration of such a complex process does not lend itself readily to a quantitative analysis. For that reason, the researchers used telephone interviews, supplemented by published and archival records, in order to produce a narrative description of the development and dissemination role of the Public Library Association. This descriptive analysis comprises most of Chapter 2. Also included is specific information about the research methods that were used.

Part II

Chapter 3 centers on the findings and conclusions drawn from two separate surveys that were conducted for the second part of the study. Questionnaires were mailed to state library development agencies and to a national sample of small and medium-sized public libraries in order to explore the diffusion and adoption process from the perspective of these two groups of intended receivers. Information regarding sample selection, questionnaire design, and methods of data analysis for this part of the study can also be found in Chapter 3.

Synthesis

The function of the final chapter of this report is to synthesize the separate pieces of the study in order to describe the picture that emerges of the development and diffusion among public librarians of this specific innovation. Chapter 4 examines the discernable patterns in this complex mosaic and compares them with the components of the theoretical diffusion model that served as the study's framework.

The researchers believe that conclusions drawn from this synthesis will be helpful to those attempting to disseminate other innovations among the diverse population of public librarians.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The same portion of the diffusion literature was utilized in both parts of the study; therefore the present chapter will conclude with a brief review of the relevant literature.

Organizational Change

The body of research inspired by the topic of innovation is remarkable with regard to its volume, to its cross-disciplinary nature, and to its steady growth over the past several decades. Two standard bibliographies published in 1968 (Rogers[10] and Havelock[11]) list 1,100 and 4,400 entries respectively. *The Annotated Archive of Diffusion References* ,[12] which appeared in 1980, lists 7,640. Although the rapid rate at which innovation studies were being produced in the 1960s and 1970s has slowed in recent years, there remains a keen interest in the topic among scholars in numerous disciplines.

The comprehensive, yet largely inconsistent, nature of the literature on change and innovation may in part be the result of the variety of economic, political, geographic, psychological, sociological, educational, and managerial perspectives that have been brought to bear on the topic.[13] Although a number of authors have attempted to summarize the research in this area,[14] empirical findings are often not comparable due in part to conceptual confusion and inconsistency in the way the same terms are defined in different studies. In addition to studies of innovation in specific organizational settings, a large portion of the literature centers on change and innovation among individuals, groups, or societies. The extent to which empirical generalizations and theories can reasonable be applied across different types of organizations is as yet unclear, and

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[10] Everett M. Rogers, *Bibliography of Research on the Diffusion of Innovations* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1968).

[11] Ronald G. Havelock, *Bibliography on Knowledge Utilization and Dissemination* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1968).

[12] W. D. Crano, S. Ludwig, and G. W. Selnow, eds., *Annotated Archive of Diffusion References: Empirical and Theoretical Works* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Center for Evaluation and Assessment, 1980).

[13] John R. Kimberly and Michael J. Evanisko, "Organizational Innovation: The Influence of Individual, Organizational, and Contextual Factors on Hospital Adoption of Technological and Administrative Innovations," *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 24, no. 4 (1981): 689-713.

[14] G. D. Brewer, "On the Theory and Practice of Innovation," *Technology in Society*, vol 3, no. 3 (1980): 68-84; E. M. Rogers and F. Shoemaker, *Communication of Innovations* (New York: The Free Press, 1971); G. Zaltman, R. Duncan, and J . Holbek, *Innovations and Organizations* (New York: John Wiley, 1973).

there remains much to be learned about the development, diffusion, and consequences of innovation.

Previous works on organizational change and innovation have tended to focus on one of the following aspects: the specific attributes of technical or managerial innovations that relate to their probability of adoption; the techniques and strategies involved in the diffusion process; or the characteristics of individual change agents and/or their target audiences.

The studies that have helped to frame the research reported here have in common the suggestion that adoption of an innovation is influenced by the nature of the change agency; by the potential adopters economic access to the innovation[15]; and by the size of the organization.[16] Central to this study is that portion of the literature dealing with change agent roles in the communication of information about organizational innovations[17]; and, more specifically, the view of the diffusion process as a complex social system in which the flow of knowledge from its origination to its utilization involves many senders and receivers, all linked together by various mechanisms, such as overlapping memberships, shared values, and established communication channels.[18]

Definitions

According to Bhola,[19] changes that take place during a particular time period can result from the introduction of naturalistic or interventionist social processes. Examples of changes that occur naturalistically are those modifications in existing cultural patterns that come from changing economic, political, or technological conditions. Interventionist change, which Bhola equates with "planned change," takes place when a change agent manipulates social processes. A *change agent* can be defined as a professional who seeks to influence potential adopters of an innovation. In this study, we have extended the definition to include organized groups that collectively assume a change agency role.

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15 Lawrence A. Brown, *Innovation Diffusion: A New Perspective* (London: Methuen, 1981).

16 Michael Aiken and Jerald Hage, "The Organic Organization and Innovation," *Sociology* 5 (1971): 63-82; William M. Evan and G. Black, "Innovation in Business Organizations: Some Factors Associated with Success or Failure of Staff Proposals," *Journal of Business* 40 (1967): 519-530; Lawrence B. Mohr, "Determinants of Innovation in Organizations," *American Political Science Review* 63 (1969): 111-26.

17 A. Gallaher, "The Role of the Advocate and Directed Change," *Media and Educational Innovation* (Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1964); Havelock (1969).

18 Havelock (1969); Rogers and Shoemaker (1971).

19 H. S. Bhola, "Planning Change in Education and Development: The CLER Model in the Context of a Mega Model," *Viewpoints in Teaching and Learning*, vol. 58, no. 4 (1982): 14.

An *innovation* is defined as any idea, practice, or object which is perceived to be new by the individual or organization either adopting or rejecting it.[20] The length of time the idea has been known to other people is unimportant. "If the idea seems new to the individual, it is an innovation."[21]

Diffusion is the process through which the innovation is incorporated into a social system. This process is defined by Katz et al.[22] as the acceptance, over time, of some specific idea, object, or practice, by individuals, groups, or organizations, linked to specific communication channels, to a social or organizational structure, and to a given system of values. The diffusion process involves "informational use, social interaction, and behavioral change."[23] According to Rogers and Shoemaker, diffusion is a subset of communication research that is concerned with new ideas. Essentially, the diffusion process is the human interaction by which one person communicates a new idea to one or several other persons.[24]

A distinction may be made between diffusion and dissemination, if one defines "diffusion" as a *process* leading to the adoption of an innovation, and "dissemination" as a communication *activity* aimed at gaining widespread awareness of the existence and the nature of the innovation. This distinction is subtle and seldom drawn in the literature; therefore, the terms are used interchangeably throughout this report.

Rogers and Shoemaker identify the major elements in the diffusion of a new idea as: "(1) the *innovation* (2) which is *communicated* through certain *channels* (3) over *time* (4) among members of a *social system.*[25] This study of the development and diffusion of the Public Library Association's planning and evaluation process considered each of these elements; however, the research design did not incorporate a longitudinal approach. Therefore, investigation of the time factor and of communication channels was dependent upon (and limited by) the memories of respondents. The social system was defined as consisting of the practice of public librarianship and several of the external environments with which it interacts: the scholarly and research community, government agencies, professional schools, and professional associations.

In a discussion of communication within academia, Havelock[26] suggested that opinion leadership is especially important in this type of loosely structured

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20 G. Zaltman, *Processes and Phenomena of Social Change* (New York: Wiley, 1973).

21 Rogers and Shoemaker , p. 19.

22 E. Katz, et al., "Traditions of Research on the Diffusion of Innovation," in G. Zaltman, et al., *Creating Social Change* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972) , pp. 93-111.

23 Bhola, p. 14.

24 Rogers and Shoemaker, p. 24.

25 ibid., p. 18.

26 Havelock, (1969).

community. Individual scholars working independently can influence colleagues to a much larger extent than one would find in bureaucratic systems. The public library practice environment can also be characterized as "loosely structured"; therefore, opinion leadership was a factor that was of interest to the researchers. An *opinion leader* is an individual who can influence other people's opinions and behaviors, has better access to others within the system, and is more likely to be a successful disseminator of information. Although the study did not attempt to identify specific persons as opinion leaders, it did seek to discover whether opinion leadership was a factor in the development and/or diffusion phases.

According to Rogers and Shoemaker,[27] opinion leaders are usually "cosmopolites"; that is, they have more outside contacts than the average member of their social system. One of the means by which opinion leadership is acquired is through access to outside reference groups--the individual can then serve as a gatekeeper for the entrance of new ideas into the social system.

Dissemination Strategies

When an individual or an organization makes the deliberate decision to introduce a new idea or practice into a social system, certain strategies for bringing about change come into play. Chin and Benne[28] suggest that three general kinds of strategies exist: empirical-rational, normative-educative, and power-coercive.

The *empirical-rational* approach assumes that people are guided by reason and will use the yardstick of self-interest in their decisions about adopting changes in behavior or practices. Strategies falling into this category depend upon scientific investigation, research, and education in order to disseminate knowledge. Several of the strategies in this approach involve: (1) the use of basic research for knowledge building and the use of general education for the dissemination of results; (2) getting the right person in the right position in order to transform knowledge into practice; (3) using applied research and planned systems for linking researchers and potential adopters; and (4) utopian thinking to "envision a direction for planning and action in the present."[29]

The *normative-educative* strategies assume that people are inherently active and in search of satisfaction, not passive and dependent upon the environment for a stimulus to which they can respond. This approach emphasizes re-educating potential adopters toward a desired point of view. Re-education in this case involves changing established norms, values, and cultural institutions, since

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27 Rogers and Shoemaker, p. 218.

28 R. Chin and K. D. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems," in *The Planning of Change*, ed. G. W. Bennis, K. D. Benne, R. Chin, and K. E. Corey (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976), p. 23.

29 ibid., pp. 25-30.

value conflicts must first be resolved before attempts are made to change existing practices through the introduction of innovation.[30]

The *power-coercive* strategies are characterized by the use of power to influence adoption behavior. Power in this instance can be political or economic: the use of sanctions or the withholding of funds to force compliance with the innovative idea.[31]

Because the researchers looked at PLA's innovation from its origins, through its development and refinement, to its diffusion on state and local levels, we assumed that various change agents would become involved in the dissemination effort at various times; and, as a consequence, no single kind of strategy would emerge. Instead, we expected that our investigation would reveal elements characteristic of each of Chin and Benne's three strategy types.

The purpose of diffusion strategies is to gain acceptance by the practitioner or end user of a proposed innovation. The diffusion process is concerned with creating an awareness and understanding of the innovation that will ultimately cause the user to assess its value and usefulness in making a decision concerning possible adoption. Guba suggested six general techniques that change agents might use:

1. Telling: concerned with written words (newspapers, newsletters, books, articles) or spoken words (conversations, conferences, speeches)

2. Showing: structured experiences (demonstrations, simulations, participant observation of films, slides, displays)

3. Helping: involving the diffuser directly in the affairs of the user, but on the user's terms (consultation, service, troubleshooting)

4. Involving: including the user in the development, testing, and packaging of the proposed idea, as well as assisting in the diffusion process

5. Training: an attempt to familiarize users with the features of the innovation, increase their skill or competency in using the innovation, and/or change their attitudes (through

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30 ibid., pp. 35-38.
31 ibid., pp. 39-40.

workshops, institutes, apprenticeships, in-service training, formal courses)

6. Intervening: suggests direct involvement with the user, but on the diffuser's terms (mandating certain actions, introducing sanctions, and so forth)[32]

Diffusion Models

In seeking an appropriate diffusion model, we looked for one that would be inclusive enough for us to be able to examine the life cycle of the innovation in order to identify major phases from origination and development to diffusion and adoption.

We also wanted a model that took into account the variables that were of particular interest to the researchers: (1) the communication channels and linkages between developers of the innovation and the practitioners at whom diffusion efforts were aimed; (2) the diffusion techniques and methods that were used; and (3) the characteristics of the potential adopters that might facilitate or inhibit their utilization of the innovation.

Finally, we sought a flexible model that would lend itself to decomposition; that is, one that would readily allow us to apply selected pieces, in the likely event that time and financial constraints prevented application of the model in its entirety.

From the studies that had been conducted through the late 1960s, Havelock[33] identified three general models of knowledge dissemination and utilization: Research, Development and Diffusion (RD&D), Social Interaction (SI), and Problem-Solver (P-S).

The RD&D model focuses on the activities of the originator or developer of the innovation. It suggests that there are certain stages in the process of knowledge production and diffusion that might be characterized as: research, development, packaging, and dissemination.

The SI model assumes the pre-existence of an innovation and concentrates instead on how the innovation comes to the attention of potential adopters and how it is spread within a social system. The emphasis is on the characteristics of individual adopters and on rates of adoption.

The P-S model sees the process as starting with a perceived need on the part of the user. The need is translated into a problem statement; alternative solutions

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32 As discussed in Nancy Helburn Stein, "Causal Attributions and Effectiveness of Diffusion Techniques as Perceived by Physical Education Department Chairpersons," unpublished PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, 1978, pp. 77-78

33 Havelock (1969).

The P-S model sees the process as starting with a perceived need on the part of the user. The need is translated into a problem statement; alternative solutions are generated; and an optimal solution is tried and evaluated. Change is self-initiated by the user, but is facilitated by the activities of a change agent who helps in problem diagnosis and solution.

The RD&D model focuses on the knowledge production system (the scholarly and research communities); and the SI model centers on the knowledge utilization system (the clients who will actually use the innovation). The P-S model is to some extent a combination of the two, in that it portrays the user in the role of change agent, engaging in group problem solving with the research community.

Havelock suggested that "there is a need to bring these three viewpoints together in a single perspective that includes the strongest features of each."[34] He put forth the concept of "linkage" as a means of unifying and synthesizing the three models.

Linkage Model

Havelock's linkage model focuses initially on the user as *problem-solver* : "there is an initial 'felt need' which leads into a 'diagnosis' and 'problem statement' and works through 'search' and 'retrieval' phases to a 'solution,' and the 'application' of that solution."[35] The emphasis of the linkage model, however, is on the relationship between the user and the outside "resource system." The user seeks help from the resource system in the search for a solution. This is a two-way process, as the resource person must have a meaningful exchange with and accept feedback from the user. Throughout this interaction, the user "should be learning and beginning to simulate resource system processes such as scientific evaluation and product development. Only through understanding, appreciating, and to some degree, emulating such processes, will the user come to be a sophisticated consumer of R and D."[36]

The Havelock model seemed particularly appropriate in that it stresses a series of reciprocal relationships as the resource person (with a need that is the counterpart to the user's need) draws upon external specialists as well. Eventually, these overlapping linkages form a "chain of knowledge utilization" connecting the most remote sources of knowledge with the most remote consumers of knowledge.[37] There are a variety of roles that individuals, media, and organizations play that could be characterized as performing a "linking"

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34 ibid., chap. 11, p. 15.
35 ibid.
36 ibid., chap. 11, p. 17.
37 ibid.

function. According to Havelock, "connected to every phase, every aspect, and every problem in the dissemination and utilization process, one could conceptualize a specific role: someone responsible for retrieving knowledge from basic research; someone responsible for identifying new innovations in practice; someone responsible for writing handbooks and producing packaged knowledge for potential clients of various sorts and so forth."[38] From a topology of linking agents suggested by Havelock, we adapted eight role types that we assumed would be found among the developers and disseminators of the planning process. Table 1 indicates each type of role and its function.

Adoption Process

Another portion of the diffusion literature that bears on the present study concerns the actual adoption itself. Decisions concerning whether to adopt an innovation are not instantaneous, but are made after the potential user has gone through a series of steps or phases over time. These phases are generally referred to as constituting the "adoption process." Rogers theorized a five stage process: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption.[39] At the awareness stage, the potential adopter is aware of the existence of the innovation, but has no information about it. During the next phase, the person develops an interest in the innovation and seeks further information. The evaluation stage involves an assessment of the value and utility of the innovation to the individual's specific situation and results in a decision to either try out the innovation or to reject it. The next step is a trial period in which the innovation is implemented, possibly on a small scale. The last stage involves full-scale adoption in which the decision is made to use the innovation on a continuous basis. A modification of this last phase would allow the opposite decision to be made: not to continue use of the innovation. In this case, a final decision—to continue or discontinue—is the end result, rather than adoption being the final outcome.

Library Change Literature

Although there has been a vast interest in diffusion studies among scholars in other disciplines, this has not been true in the library field. In a 1982 review of the library literature on diffusion and innovation, Musmann[40] was able to locate

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38 ibid., chap. 7, p. 2

39 Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 3d ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1983).

40 Klaus Musmann, "The Diffusion of Innovations in Libraries," *Libri*, 32 (1982): 257-77.

only two library studies, both of them dissertations. One of these by Luquire[41] has some relevance here.

Table 1. Linkage Roles

Role Type	Function
A. Conveyor	to carry or transfer knowledge from producers to users
B. Consultant	to assist in identification of problems and resources; to assist in adaptation for use (tells "how" while conveyor tells "what") — the relationship between the consultee or user and the consultant is initiated by the consultee and is temporary and specific; the consultant is from a different professional discipline; role is advisory, with no responsibility for implementation; has no administrative relationship with the consultee
C. Trainer	to transfer by instilling in the user an entire area of knowledge or practice; has control over the learning environment but contact does not continue into the field setting; trainer's linking function ends after a designated training period is over
D. Leader	to create an effective link through power or influence within the receiver's own group; can be a formal leader or gatekeeper; or can be an informal opinion leader —may also function as conveyor or consultant, but is an "inside change agent" who makes new ideas and practices credible, legitimate to the group
E. Innovator	to transfer by initiating diffusion within the system; the first person to take up a new idea; the originator/advocate/champion of the innovation within the group or organization
F. Defender	to champion the user (library practitioner) against the innovation; to point out pitfalls/problems; to serve as the "quality controller" or objective evaluator who makes sure value, relevance, etc. of the innovation is adequately demonstrated
G. Knowledge Builders (basic scientists, applied researchers, experts, scholars)	to serve as futuristic planners/goal setters; to define basic values and directions; to integrate findings into theories that make sense; to retrieve knowledge from basic research, screen, package, and transmit it to the user; translate research into usable products and services and to translate practice concerns into researchable problems

41 Wilson C. Luquire, "Selected Factors Affecting Library Staff Perceptions of an Innovative System: A Study of ARL Libraries in OCLC," unpublished PhD dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, 1976.

H. Practitioners	to transfer benefits (derived from the innovation) to clients and end users through specialized services and products which incorporate new knowledge —practitioners (librarians) can serve as their own linkers if they have knowledge of resources, access to resources, and are able to diagnose their own needs

Luquire was interested in factors (such as employee age, education, library size and so forth) that might influence staff perceptions of OCLC (a shared online cataloging utility) as an innovative system. He found that those who knew of an innovation early had a more positive attitude toward the innovation than did later knowers and adopters. This finding is related to one of the assumptions underlying the present study: administrators of larger public libraries will have already been engaging in some sort of formal long range planning prior to the introduction of PLA's planning process. They might even be considered early innovators and may have played change agent or gatekeeper roles in the diffusion process. This was not investigated in the present study, but was among the assumptions that led to the exclusion of libraries serving over 50,000 people. One of the hypotheses that the study did test, however, is that library size is a factor in adoption of innovation; organizational size has had a fairly constant relationship with innovativeness across many diffusion studies.

In their article on managing innovation, Drake and Olsen linked innovations in academic libraries to perceptions on the part of the library staff that problems exist, to economic constraints, and to various incentives from the environment (technology, user demand).[42] In exploring some of the environmental pressures that existed prior to the introduction of PLA's innovation, the present study sought to determine whether similar perceptions influenced the developers of the planning process.

Damanpour and Childers[43] studied the rate of adoption of innovations in public libraries from 1970 to 1982 in relation to the size of the library. Their data suggested that larger organizations adopt innovations at a greater rate than do smaller ones, but that the rate of adoption of smaller and medium-sized public libraries is increasing at a faster pace. [This would seem to account for the typical "S" shaped diffusion curve found in many studies. Although larger organizations adopt quickly, there are fewer of them; therefore, the proportion of adopters rises slowly at first. As smaller organizations begin to adopt, their greater numbers cause the curve to rise sharply. Eventually, a saturation point is reached and the

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42 Miriam A. Drake and Harold A. Olsen, "The Economics of Library Innovation," *Library Trends* 28 (1979): 89-105.

43 Fariborz Damanpour and Thomas Childers, "The Adoption of Innovations in Public Libraries," *Library and Information Science Research* 7 (1984): 231-46.

rate of diffusion levels off.] Damanpour and Childers made a case for a relationship between the appropriate innovation implemented at the appropriate time and the good health of the organization. Innovations were seen as a means of facilitating adaptation to the library's environment and of improving the opportunity for the organization to achieve its goals.

A more recent investigation, conducted in 1986 by Griffiths and others from King Research, Inc.,[44] used case studies to explore the process of implementing innovations in three types of libraries; academic, public, and special. One of the innovations studied was the use of "output performance measures"; their other innovations were primarily technological in nature. The King researchers developed a tentative model of innovation diffusion among libraries, which included a number of variables that influence the adoption process: characteristics of the libraries and librarians; characteristics of the social networks within which libraries and librarians operate; and characteristics of innovations. They also identified "outputs" of the adoption process: problems in the process; adoption; rejection; adaptation/integration; outcomes of adoption; and continuance or discontinuance. The model is quite complex in that it includes interactions on both a micro level (individuals and groups within the library setting) and a macro level (the organization itself, as well as other influencing organizations and the external environment). The factors that were hypothesized as influencing innovativeness on the part of librarians and libraries, which were also of interest to the present study, included the following:

1. librarians' levels of education
2. extent of networking activities by libraries and librarians
3. membership in professional associations
4. attendance at professional conferences
5. pressure or encouragement from government
6. librarians' reading of the professional literature

The case study method utilized by the King researchers allowed the development of a comprehensive model that included many levels of interaction. The present research was much broader in scope, including innovation development as well as dissemination and adoption. For our purposes, it appeared appropriate to apply selected components of the Havelock linkage model, bringing in other hypothesized models as appropriate.

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44 Jose-Marie Griffiths, et al., *Diffusion of Innovations in Library and Information Science*. Final Report (Rockville, MD: King Research Inc., 1986).

Chapter II

The Development and Diffusion of an Innovation

This part of the report provides a descriptive summary and an analysis of the Public Library Association's efforts to develop and disseminate its planning and evaluation tools.

The origination, development, and diffusion of a managerial innovation by a national professional association is a long and complex process, involving a network of intricate relationships among association committees, scholars, and practitioners. The researchers initially attempted to reduce this complexity to a sequential listing of events in order to provide a starting point and to increase our understanding of "what happened when." But a chronology alone fails to capture the dynamics, the serendipitous occurrences, the personal and institutional linkages, and the evolutionary nature of the process. These are among the aspects of PLA's development and diffusion activities that we wanted to explore.

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The researchers began by piecing together from the published literature as much of a chronology as was possible. This guided our initial impressions of the development and diffusion process and of the fit between our theoretical model and "real world" occurrences.

Journal articles provide some clues as to how the manuals originated, and indicate a direct link between concepts found in certain earlier publications and PLA's decision to substitute community-based planning and evaluation for national standards. But despite the fact that PLA made deliberate and extensive use of professional journals (especially its own journal *Public Libraries*) to present and explain its innovation, the published literature is fragmentary and incomplete with regard to the development process itself and to PLA's planned dissemination methods and objectives.

For anecdotal and other types of information that would allow us to verify, flesh out, and add background depth to the chronology, we relied on two major sources: (1) telephone interviews with selected individuals who had an early and continuing involvement in the development and dissemination processes; and (2) archival records and file documents available at PLA's Chicago headquarters.

In addition, the information from these sources was helpful in the generation of appropriate questionnaire items for use in the second part of the study (reported in Chapter 3). The purpose of the questionnaires was to explore how state library development agencies may have facilitated the dissemination of the manuals and to discover the extent to which smaller public libraries have implemented or are considering implementation of the planning process. It was expected that an empirical model of the development and diffusion process would emerge from a comparison of the findings from the two surveys with the combined results of the interviews and the examination of published and unpublished documents.

The information gathered through interviews and written documentation allowed both parts of the study to focus on those avenues of dissemination that PLA had identified as major; and to examine the actions of state agencies within the context of the role envisioned for them in PLA's overall plan for dissemination.

It should be noted that it was not the intention of the researchers to produce a detailed, definitive history of the development of the PLA planning process. Our information sources constitute a relatively small fraction of the individuals that would need to be interviewed and the documents that would need to be analyzed for such a purpose. Rather, our intention was to gather sufficient information to allow us to examine and to characterize the development and diffusion of this single innovation. It was our expectation that networking and other information flow patterns would emerge from the study, providing data and insights useful in future efforts to disseminate innovations among public librarians.

Data Collection Methods

The literature pertaining to the Public Library Association's planning process was searched for names of individuals who appeared to have intimate and/or lengthy associations with the development and dissemination of the manuals. The researchers selected a purposive sample of nine persons from the twenty names that were identified. The following considerations were used to select the sample: (1) early involvement in the development process; (2) presumed knowledge of the internal structure of PLA; (3) involvement with more than one manual or more than one phase of the dissemination effort; and for practical reasons, (4) availability of a current address. In addition, we tried to include in our sample representatives from the research and practitioner communities as well as those with formal ties to ALA/PLA.

Letters, with reply post cards, were sent to each of the nine individuals, requesting their participation in a telephone interview (See Appendix A). Eight agreed to participate; one letter was returned because the person had moved and left no forwarding address. Because those who had consented to

be interviewed matched our selection criteria quite well, we decided that eight persons would constitute an adequate sample for our purposes; and that they represented a suitable cross-section of practitioners, researchers, and PLA committee members and officers.

Prior to conducting the interviews, we sent each participant a copy of our draft chronology in a flow chart format, indicating "existing conditions" that apparently precipitated the move toward community-based planning, and specific "events" in the actual development and dissemination process. The chronology was divided into four phases:

(1)	Late 1960s through Mid-1970s:	Awareness of the Problem and the Search for Solutions
(2)	Mid-1970s through Early 1980s:	Research and Development of the First Set of Manuals
(3)	1980 to 1983:	Dissemination and Evaluation
(4)	1984 to 1987:	Development of PLDP

Participants were requested to review the chronology and note omissions or discrepancies to discuss with us during the interviews. A number of modifications to the initial chronology emerged as the study progressed.

We also sent the participants a list, characterizing a number of possible "linkage roles" (see Chapter 1, pages 17-18). We had adapted this list from Havelock's linkage model of innovation and diffusion[1] and we wanted to explore whether such roles could be identified as having been assumed by people involved in developing and disseminating the planning process manuals.

The interviews were conducted during February and March 1989. Entirely by chance, it was mutually convenient to interview one individual in person; the other seven interviews took place over the telephone. We had developed a list of twenty-five questions to serve as "prompts." The participants were knowledgeable about behind-the-scenes events, had an

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[1] Ronald G. Havelock, *Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, 1969).

intuitive understanding of the researchers' goals, and were willing to discuss frankly their involvement and perceptions, so that little prompting was necessary. The interviews tended to be informal, free-flowing discussions that lasted from approximately seventy-five to ninety minutes.

A three-person research team visited PLA headquarters in Chicago on March 14-15, 1989. We were able to examine committee minutes, correspondence, and other documents dating from the 1960s.

Data from the interviews, the published literature, and PLA's archives were used to compile a list of 519 keywords (including persons, places, concepts, events, and organizational entities). These were used to prepare the descriptive summary that comprises the bulk of this chapter.

In developing the following narrative, the authors included a number of comments taken directly from the interviews. When a quotation appears in the text without being attributed to a specific source, the reader may assume that the remark came from one of the individuals we interviewed, and that identification of the source has been deliberately withheld in order to maintain confidentiality.

Some of the PLA documents that we used in compiling the report were in the form of handwritten notes, memos identified only with the originator's name and a date, or other items that presented similar difficulties with respect to our ability to provide a "complete" citation. We chose not to footnote such items, but to identify them as clearly as possible through a parenthetical reference. Our footnoted references, therefore, are generally limited to citations from the published literature.

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AS CHANGE AGENT

The Public Library Association is one of the older divisions of the American Library Association, having been formed in 1950 by a merger of the Division of Public Libraries, the Library Extension Division, and the Trustees Division. Due to a structural reorganization in 1959, the name was changed from the Public Library Division to the Public Library Association. At that time the trustees formed their own division, the American Library Trustees Association (ALTA).

Until the past decade or so, PLA was not considered a particularly effective nor highly visible division. Shirley Mills-Fischer (formerly executive director of PLA) suggests that PLA's placid nature was due to the fact that the American Library Association had the "more readily recognizable public library program."[2] The implication is that PLA at that time had no

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[2]Shirley Mills-Fischer, "The Public Library Association," *Library Times International* vol. 2, no. 5 (March 1986): 82.

incentive to be creative nor aggressive in its programming and membership drives.

In 1976, ALA underwent an extensive reorganization that made each division semi-autonomous and responsible for generating its own operating revenues (instead of receiving an allocation for its programming from ALA's budget). As part of the reorganization, one ALA program director became responsible for the management of PLA and two other divisions, ALTA and the Reference and Adult Services Division (RASD). It was under this structural arrangement that PLA obtained a federal grant to fund the research leading to the first planning and evaluation manuals. After only two years of shared management, however, PLA felt confident enough to hire its own program director.

Two other divisions of ALA (the Association of College and Research Libraries and the American Association of School Librarians) had previously conducted successful conferences on their own, leading to increased membership and operating revenues. Their experiences prompted PLA to plan and hold its first national conference in Baltimore in 1983. The conference was financially successful and increased PLA membership by 17 percent. It "was a success in terms of the attendees' evaluations. It had provided a public library focus with a manageable number of participants in a manageable location. [It generated] surplus revenues that would enable PLA to enter into more risk taking ventures and to increase its services to members."[3] PLA conferences have since been held in St. Louis (1986) and in Pittsburgh (1988), with a 1991 conference being planned for San Diego.

Although the planning process has been a primary factor in PLA's increased visibility within recent years, the association has also been providing programming and publications in other areas (for example, its development of workshops and an accompanying handbook on cost funding for public librarians[4]).

Among PLA's current objectives are several relating to its continuing education and information dissemination missions:

> To raise the awareness of public librarians about the issues related to free and equal access to information;
>
> To develop a coordinated program for continuing education which includes conference programming, preconferences, regional workshops and publications;

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3 ibid., p. 82.

4 Phillip Rosenberg, *Cost Funding for Public Libraries: A Manager's Handbook* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1986).

To provide a Public Library Information Service for inquiries on public library issues;

To initiate, support, and disseminate information on new research projects on public library service or management;

To provide public librarians with planning and evaluation tools and to advocate and encourage the utilization of these tools.[5]

The Public Library Association is the largest national organization addressing the special interests of public librarians. As its objectives and recent activities suggest, it is attempting to improve its effectiveness and visibility as an agent for change within the public library field. Before addressing the development and dissemination of PLA's planning techniques, it may be helpful to look briefly at some of the environmental and other factors that led to PLA's decision to promote change in the management practices of public librarians and to assume an active role as change agent for the profession.

Environmental Pressures

As the external environment of the mid-1960s began to exert a different type of pressure upon public libraries, a growing number of library directors recognized the need for change in their managerial and service philosophies. In addition, the tendency of public libraries to attempt to serve multiple purposes was being criticized by researchers such as Bundy, who claimed that

> the public library remains basically a purposeless agency with relatively weak resources, diversified commitments, and fundamental biases which severely circumscribe its effectiveness. In these circumstances, it is little wonder that the library does not function in any of the ideal roles to which it aspires–as intellectual beacon, as information center, or as adult education agency. Given such high ideals and the inherent promise of this long-standing public institution, how can its general irrelevance be accounted for? The answer is that time has marched on. Extraordinary educational, political, economic, social, and technological changes have occurred and are occurring with increasing regularity. While the culture in which libraries function has

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[5] Mills-Fischer, p. 83.

> dramatically altered, the public library has stood still, caught in the straight-jacket of its traditional view of itself and the world, by its historical commitments, and by its clienteles.[6]

Among those librarians who were searching for an appropriate response to a changing environment, there was a growing dissatisfaction with national public library standards. The inadequacy of such standards, which had been issued periodically through the American Library Association since 1933, was clearly recognized by the Standards Committee of PLA charged with revising the 1956 standards. In the preface to the edition prepared by this committee and published in 1967, it states,

> The committee repeats the plea that research and experimentation are urgently needed as verification of these standards. In particular, quantitative measures correlated with the quality of library performance must be developed to provide the yardsticks demanded by governing and appropriating bodies. Moreover, the wide variation in levels of public service from state to state, makes the establishment of norms impossible without much more data than are presently available. The committee hopes the states will set those norms for themselves, perhaps in the form of five-year plans, for bringing their service to the level proposed in this document.[7]

It was significant that the group responsible for this final edition of national standards openly admitted that the validity of the standards was questionable. As Nancy Bolt indicated, this statement "forecasts the idea of local diversity and five-year plans, an idea that developed into the *PLA Planning Process*."[8]

Although the need for a better means of self-evaluation was being expressed in a number of professional circles by 1967, the idea of community-based planning as a substitute for national standards was still a long way from a fully developed concept. But a number of fortuitous events and circumstances were occurring that would bring certain individuals and

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6 Mary Lee Bundy, "Factors Influencing Public Library Use," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 42 (December 1967): 382.

7 Public Library Association, Standards Committee, *Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems, 1966*, (Chicago: American Library Association, 1967).

8 Nancy Bolt, "Performance Measures for Public Libraries," in *Public Libraries and the Challenges of the Next Two Decades*, ed. Alphonse F. Trezza (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1985), p. 48.

groups into working relationships and eventually lead to PLA's unprecedented effort to fulfill the role of change agent.

Prior Occurrences

A significant link in the chain leading to *A Planning Process for Public Libraries* and the first edition of *Output Measures for Public Libraries* was being forged at Rutgers University during the early 1970s. The late Ernest R. De Prospo was then directing an ALA-PLA project on the "Measurement of Effectiveness of Public Library Service."

The De Prospo study had grown out of an earlier discussion within the Public Library Association regarding the possibility of public library accreditation as a means of establishing quality control. A proposal entitled "Accreditation of Public Libraries: A Study to Develop Criteria for Judging Quality of Service, in Order to Plan a Method for Nationwide Public Library Accreditation" was presented to the American Library Association by PLA in 1967. The apparent problem with the proposal was its focus on public library accreditation as the ultimate goal. In the view of ALA, such a peer review process would be highly inappropriate since there were no validated measures of public library effectiveness. The ALA Executive Board rejected the proposal with the recommendation that "it be developed further in consultation with knowledgeable persons in the field of research."[9]

Such consultation did occur as PLA's Standards Revision Committee was joined in its deliberations by ALA staff members and several researchers from Rutgers University. As a result, ALA submitted a revised proposal on behalf of PLA to the U.S. Office of Education. Funding for the first two phases of the proposal was approved. In 1971 the work of De Prospo and his colleagues at the Bureau of Library and Information Science Research at Rutgers began. Their objective was to develop quantitative methods by which to evaluate library performance. A PLA-appointed advisory committee provided input to the study that "helped formulate and determine the direction of the project, and from time to time modified and corrected its course." [10]

The original impetus for the study—the proposal to accredit public libraries—was forgotten as PLA's emphasis switched to planning and measurement techniques.

As an interesting aside, the accreditation idea did eventually resurface in a proposal to the PLA Executive Board in 1988. The PLA committee charged

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[9] As quoted in Mary Jo Lynch, "The Public Library Association and Public Library Planning," *Journal of Library Administration*, Vol. 2, no, 2 (1982): 36.
[10] Gerald M. Born, "Introduction," in Ernest R. De Prospo, Ellen Altman, and Kenneth E. Beasley, *Performance Measures for Public Libraries* (Chicago: ALA, 1973), p. vii.

with investigating the possibility of accreditation presented for reactions a draft set of criteria, with this accompanying statement:

> In developing these criteria, the committee has become more and more aware of the relationship of this document to the Public Library Development Plan (PLDP). Qualitative criteria for evaluating a program of service mean that the library must have thought through and put into practice its plan of community service. Goals and objectives, planning, staff, resources, and financing and facilities represent areas that must be carefully developed and made operational before a peer evaluation process can be put into effect. Accreditation is a logical "next step" after a library has moved through the planning process.[11]

Although PLA's *Planning and Role Setting Process* and *Output Measures for Public Libraries* might be assumed to satisfy the requirement for a method by which effectiveness can be measured, PLA's Executive Board this time around decided not to pursue the idea of accreditation further.[12] It is probable that adverse reaction or expressions of disinterest in accreditation coming from the field dictated this decision.[13]

The Rutgers-PLA connection had begun while the PLA Standards Revision Committee, joined by ALA staff, was deliberating what should be done about revising the 1966 standards. A particular strength of the American Library Association derives from the fact that among its members are practicing librarians and information specialists, doctoral students and library and information science educators, state library personnel, library researchers working in private sector firms, and others with diverse backgrounds but a common interest in libraries. Individuals retain their involvement in ALA and its divisions even as they change their institutional affiliations and develop other networks with professional colleagues. The professional networking that occurs outside the formal ALA division and committee structure allows appropriate individuals from the practice, research, and education communities to be identified and drawn into projects as the need arises. Presumably, De Prospo and other researchers from Rutgers were brought into the Standards Revision Committee's deliberations because individual committee members had a collegial acquaintance with them and an awareness of the previous work they had done on quantitative measures.

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11 Margaret M. Kimmel and Leigh Estabrook, "Accrediting Public Libraries: An Update," *Library Journal* , Vol. 113, no. 9 (May 15, 1988): 54-55.

12 "PLA Votes Down Public Library Accreditation," *Library Journal*, Vol.113, no. 16 (October 1, 1988): 18.

13 Ronald Dubberly, "Questioning Public Library Accreditation," *Library Journal* , Vol. 113, no. 9 (May 15, 1988): 56-58.

As early as 1961 through 1964, De Prospo, Kenneth Beasley, and Ralph Blassingame had been studying statistical reporting systems for the Pennsylvania State Library.[14] This experience apparently made De Prospo and Beasley logical choices as researchers to involve in the development of PLA's proposal for a federally funded measurement project. It has been noted that the previous studies they had done influenced the approach the researchers took when they began the ALA-PLA study in 1971.[15]

As their major contribution toward what would eventually evolve into PLA's planning and evaluation manuals, the De Prospo team developed criteria for describing the effectiveness of a public library and a methodology for collecting data, which they tested on a national sample of public libraries.[16] Lack of funding prevented completion of the final field study phases of the project; however, a report, *Performance Measures for Public Libraries* (PMPL), was published by ALA in 1973.[17]

The report made a major contribution, "not because it had all the answers, but because *it suggested asking different questions.* Before PMPL, librarians and others wanting to know if a library is a 'good' one would ask: how much income does it receive, how big is the collection, how large is the staff? PMPL recommended asking: how likely is it that the people who use this library can find what they want on the shelves? How likely is it that people who use this library will find someone available to help them in the reference room?"[18]

The performance measures book has been called:

> a major breakthrough in quantitative methods for describing the accomplishments of the public library through the eyes of the user. In essence, it constitutes a type of consumer or market research, with the emphasis on how well the library performs for the individual user. Thus, when one begins to perceive the public library as a collection of widely diverse competing users who avail themselves at any one time of only a small fraction of the total services offered, then the value of

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14 Beasley, Kenneth E., "Statistical Reporting System for Local Public Libraries," Pennsylvania State Library Monographs, No. 3 (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Institute of Public Administration, 1964).

15 Ellen Altman, Ernest R. De Prospo, Phillip M. Clark, and Ellen Conner Clark, "A Data Gathering and Instructional Manual for Performance Measures in Public Libraries," *PLA Newsletter* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1976): 1-2.

16 Mary Jo Lynch, "Planning and Measurement of Library Services," typescript draft of speech given at McGill University, Montreal (dated August 22, 1986) p. 6.

17 De Prospo, Altman, and Beasley, *Performance Measures for Public Libraries.*

18 Mary Jo Lynch, "Planning and Measurement of Library Services," p. 7.

systematic self-study—market research—along the lines of the *Performance Measures* methodology becomes apparent.

From a conceptual standpoint the new methodology considers user satisfaction to be both the ultimate test of library effectiveness and, hence, the main predictor of the extent of future library use.[19]

The idea of a combined use of self-study techniques, measures of user satisfaction, and market research—implicit in the De Prospo study—is readily discernible as a major element in PLA's recommended planning and evaluation process.

Mary Jo Lynch stated that "*Output Measures* is quite different from *Performance Measures* and does not explicitly acknowledge its relationship to that publication. However, it is doubtful that *Output Measures* could have been written if the earlier work had not been done."[20] She elaborated by saying, "it seems clear that [*Output Measures*] builds directly on *Performance Measures*. . . . The twelve measures described in *Output Measures* are not the same as those in *Performance Measures,* but the conceptual base of the approach is very similar."[21]

Converging Events

At the same time as the De Prospo study was getting underway, PLA was also sponsoring another project, jointly funded by the Council on Library Resources and by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This work, *A Strategy for Public Library Change: Proposed Public Library Goals-Feasibility Study,* was directed by Allie Beth Martin, then director of the Tulsa (Oklahoma) Public Library and soon to become president of ALA.

The goals-feasibility study was published in 1972.[22] According to Mary Jo Lynch, "This study grew out of a concern in the late 60s that public libraries had lost their sense of direction. There was some feeling that a repeat of the Public Library Inquiry was needed. The inquiry, a series of studies by social scientists who examined various aspects of library service in the late 1940s . . . had given public librarians a useful base for action in the 50s and

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19 Alvin Schrader, "Performance Measures for Public Libraries: Refinements in Methodology and Reporting," *Library Research* 2 (1980-81): 130.

20 Mary Jo Lynch, "Measurement of Public Library Activity: The Search for Practical Methods," *Wilson Library Bulletin* (January 1983): 388.

21 ibid., p. 392.

22 Allie Beth Martin, Project Coordinator, *A Strategy for Public Library Change: Proposed Public Library Goals-Feasibility Study* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1972).

60s. The momentum was dying, however, and the questions of the day were: Do we need another *Inquiry* ? If not, what do we need?"[23]

Lynch went on to say that although the recommendations contained in the goals-feasibility study were not effectively carried out, it provided the impetus "to an activity not mentioned in its recommendations—the development of a manual to assist public librarians in planning. It seems clear that the need for such a manual was deeply felt at the time though not explicitly recognized in the report."[24] Lynch pointed to a statement in the study concerning consensus in the field regarding another Public Library Inquiry as an indication that the public library community at the time was ready for *A Planning Process*. The statement suggested that, if another Inquiry were to be conducted, "it should recognize that no set of goals could be universally applicable except in the broadest terms. *Each library must set its own goals based on its own community needs.*"[25] According to Lynch, "this concept is essential to the reasoning which led PLA to develop *A Planning Process* rather than revise national standards."[26]

Linking Agents

Worth noting at this point, perhaps, are the individual and institutional linkages between the *Performance Measures* study, the Allie Beth Martin goals-feasibility study, and other PLA activities that eventually culminated in the decision to develop the planning manuals.

The chair of the PLA Standards Committee in 1972/73 was Rose Vainstein, then on the faculty of the library school at the University of Michigan. The Standards Committee was continuing its discussions on the fate of national standards while awaiting the results of the De Prospo and the goals-feasibility studies. It also took note of a conference on "Total Community Library Service," sponsored by the Joint ALA/National Education Association (NEA) Committee, that suggested the "urgent need for coordination of all library services and resources at the community level in order to provide maximum service to users."[27]

In order "to provide the [Standards] Committee with a conceptual framework within which to consider the philosophic implications of total community library service on any subsequent and sequential development of

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23 Mary Jo Lynch, "The Public Library Association and Public Library Planning," p. 31.
24 ibid.
25 Allie Beth Martin, p. 26.
26 Lynch, "The Public Library Association and Public Library Planning," p. 33.
27 "Community Library Services--Working Papers on Goals and Guidelines" *School Library Journal* (September 1973): 21.

public library goals, guidelines, and standards"[28] three Task Force groups were appointed to focus on user service needs at the community level.

Each Task Force was charged with developing a working paper to guide the internal discussions of the Standards Committee. One Task Force focused on adult services, another on young adult services, and the third on children's services. Membership "was deliberately sought from as many different ALA interests as possible, by type-of-activity division and by type-of-institution affiliation."[29] Among those enlisted to serve on the Adult Services Task Force was Mary Jo Lynch, a faculty colleague of Vainstein's at Michigan. Although Lynch came from an academic library environment, she was brought into PLA's orbit primarily because of her active involvement in ALA's Reference and Adult Services Division (RASD). This initial, somewhat peripheral, encounter with PLA's standards dilemma marked the first of a series of linking roles that Lynch would continue to play in the development and dissemination of the planning process.

The completed Task Force Working Papers were published in the September 1973 issue of *School Library Journal* "in order to share with the profession at large the new direction in which the PLA Standards Committee is moving as it attempts to delineate goals and establish priorities that relate to a changing society. Given the wide variations in our nation's public libraries, the profession may well want to develop diversity by design, so that communities may have the choice of alternative patterns of library service."[30] According to Robert Rohlf, a former president of PLA, "the papers and the apparent change of direction by the committee caused significant furor in the library press and in both committee and division meetings."[31]

At the start of 1974, the PLA Standards Committee formally changed its name to the Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee (GGS), indicating that a shift had indeed occurred in PLA's stance concerning the usefulness of national standards as a development tool for public libraries. However, retention of "Standards" in the committee's designation also suggested that PLA was not yet ready to relinquish entirely the idea of producing national public library standards.

Meredith Bloss, then Chair of the newly renamed committee, requested a reaction to the Working Papers from Ralph Blassingame at Rutgers. Interestingly, Mary Jo Lynch, having left Michigan to pursue her doctorate at Rutgers, was then studying under both Blassingame and De Prospo. Blassingame asked Lynch to join him in writing the reaction to the Task Force

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28 ibid., p. 22.
29 ibid.
30 ibid., p. 23.
31 Robert H. Rohlf, "Standards for Public Libraries," *Library Trends* (Summer 1982): 68.

Working Papers. Their response to the Working Papers appeared in the *PLA Newsletter*, June 1974, under the title "Design for Diversity."[32]

Although Blassingame had no direct involvement with the performance measures study, De Prospo acknowledged that he was among those who "freely served as sounding boards for all our ideas."[33] Blassingame was therefore well acquainted with the concepts contained in the study, as was Lynch, who had direct access to the thinking of both men. In addition, Lynch understood the reasoning behind the report of the Adult Services Task Force, on which she had served. Patrick Williams considers this report the "most important" of the working papers because it "seemed to point out the way to make the public library the kind of institution envisioned in *A Strategy for Public Library Change*."[34]

Rohlf called the paper by Blassingame and Lynch "significant" in that it "developed not only a theme of where standards had been going, but a possible redirection of what should take the place of standards in the future."[35] Bloss, writing in the *Library Journal* in 1976, stated that

> Blassingame and Lynch advised the [GGS] committee in 1974 that: "What public librarians need now . . . are tools which will help them analyze a situation, set objectives, make decisions and evaluate achievements. . . ." They suggested some rules of thumb to follow in this process: "Think about planning for the future rather than reporting on the past. Think about management of a library rather than comparison of one library with another . . . be concerned with output, i.e., what the user gets from a library, rather than inputs, i.e., staff, materials, equipment."[36]

"Design for Diversity" also suggested that the Standards Committee provide a set of "goals and guidelines for community library service" that could be used until new "tools" were devised that would enable librarians to "analyze a situation, set objectives, make decisions and evaluate achievements." The suggestion was followed almost immediately.

According to Bloss, a consolidation/synthesis of the Task Force reports, entitled "Goals and Guidelines for Community Library Service" and published as a supplement to the *PLA Newsletter* , June 1975, "provides the conceptual

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32 Ralph Blassingame and Mary Jo Lynch, " Design for Diversity," *PLA Newsletter* 13, no. 2 (June 1974): 4-22.

33 De Prospo, Altman, and Beasley, p. iv.

34 Patrick Williams, *The American Public Library and the Problem of Purpose* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988), p. 110.

35 Rohlf, p. 68.

36 Meredith Bloss, "Standards for Public Library Service--Quo Vadis?" *Library Journal* 101 (June 1, 1976): 1261.

framework within which the Association now intends to develop new standards for community library services."[37] He went on to state,

> The pioneering work in the preparation of new goals and guidelines, and in the exploration of new methods for measuring outputs, can now be the base on which standards can be empirically developed.
>
> The PLA Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee (GGS) now has a finished research and development proposal and is looking for ways by which the work can be carried out. The ultimate purpose of the project is to develop a process that library managers and others can use to determine standards of performance for community library service.
>
> The immediate end-product of the work described in the proposal will be a series of publications, separate but inter-dependent, on the various aspects of the standards development process. These manuals will be tools designed for use in planning, designing, delivering, and evaluating justifiable and adequate programs. Manuals are to be based on factual evidence of actual field performance in selected library and community situations: they are not to be theoretical statements of intention or desirability. Subsequent phases of the project may develop additional publications, as the evidence is collected.[38]

The "finished research and development proposal" Bloss refered to was an initial proposal submitted to the ALA Executive Board on April 28, 1976, suggesting that user-oriented standards be developed. The proposal entered the minutes under the title: "The Process of Standards Development for Community Library Service: A Proposed Research Study from PLA" (ALA Executive Board Document #56).

Other connections may have existed between the research studies done by De Prospo and Allie Beth Martin and the decision to begin development of what eventually became the planning manuals. However, the significance of the links formed by Bloss, Lynch, and Blassingame between Rutgers and PLA is apparent from the foregoing description. The role of the scholarly and research community (represented by Rutgers in this instance) can be summarized as follows:

> 1. Research coming from that community (i.e., the early De Prospo work) was seen by the Association as potentially useful in solving the specific problem PLA had identified. As a result, researchers were deliberately invited to participate in the process of what PLA was then

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[37] ibid.
[38] ibid.

calling the development of "effectiveness measures." The result of that participation was De Prospo's *Performance Measures for Public Libraries*. The idea of measuring performance in terms of user satisfaction became a recurrent theme throughout the development of the manuals.

2. The research community was also utilized by PLA for the purpose of providing advice and counsel concerning the new direction that the Standards Committee was about to recommend. This resulted in the "Design for Diversity" paper prepared by Blassingame and Lynch, which was the catalyst for the interim document "Goals and Guidelines for Community Service." The concept of providing planning tools and techniques rather than "rules for sameness" was clearly articulated in "Design for Diversity."

In October 1975, it was announced that the GGS Committee would "seek professional research assistance in order to develop new standards... based on 'Goals and Guidelines for Community Library Services'."[39] Within a few months, however, the effort to create new national standards was at least temporarily abandoned. Instead, PLA announced its intention to provide "a set of updated tools that will enable communities to plan and assess public library programs that will meet contemporary user needs."[40]

Other Motivating Forces

Our interviews suggest that PLA's commitment to the concept of local planning and the development of planning and evaluation tools sprang from PLA's need to be more aggressive in recruiting members because ALA's new structure was now requiring that its divisions begin generating their own revenues. Under Genevieve Casey, PLA reorganized into sections as the result of the new directives from ALA. New PLA officers were installed, the executive committee was reorganized, and new committees created. At this same time, PLA was discussing what should be done about the revision of national standards in light of members' changing attitudes about the effectiveness of standards. "The whole mood then was one of change. The whole mood then was one of innovation. In a way, the philosophy of meeting local needs maybe was in our minds somewhere when we thought about 'well what can PLA do?' We need to meet the local needs of our constituents, the local librarians, and be more responsive to them."

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39 *PLA Newsletter* 14 (October 1975): 3.
40 *PLA Newsletter* 15 (Winter/Spring 1976): 3.

The idea of long range planning as a managerial response to change was certainly not original with PLA. In the private sector, corporate management literature had been promoting the concept since the 1950s at least, and numerous models of planning as a process were readily available. But the majority of PLA's constituents—public library directors—had little formal management training. The concepts of planning and managing by objectives were totally foreign to them. What PLA was proposing would indeed represent a managerial innovation in so far as the majority of public librarians were concerned.

The proposal that PLA presented to the ALA Executive Board in 1976 still retained the idea of national standards as the eventual outcome of the planning and evaluation processes that the proposed project would develop. The proposal cited the United States Office of Education as a possible funding source. At this point, PLA felt that it could not establish the planning methods nor conduct the research needed to produce national standards alone; it needed ALA's guidance and resources. ALA approved the project and suggested that PLA form a Steering Committee to solicit proposals from established researchers. PLA's Executive Director was authorized to seek funding for the project since it was obvious that PLA had no money to fund such a proposal, nor did it have the necessary paid staff and expertise to further develop the project on its own.

At the time PLA was pondering the direction in which it wanted to move with regard to standards, at least one public library had already begun to implement planning methods and performance measures adapted from the corporate sector. At one of the branches of the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) some form of output/performance measuring was occurring as early as 1972. The branch librarian's "initiatives sparked interest at the county level."[41] De Prospo gave a speech in Maryland in the early 1970s and one of his students "then came to do studies of the state system. . . and then interviewed County Librarians, asking how collections were used."[42] Staff at BCPL began using the De Prospo manual in 1974. "By 1978 there was a lot of experimentation going on at different branches."[43]

In 1977, the same year in which PLA received federal funding for its proposal, BCPL adopted a five year plan that included a formal management-by-objectives process. The process and the five year plan were produced through a contract with King Research, Inc., with Vernon E. (Gene) Palmour directing the project. *A Planning Process for Public Libraries* and the first edition of *Output Measures for Public Libraries* were based on the work

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[41] As quoted in Jose-Marie Griffiths, et al., *Diffusion of Innovations in Library and Information Science. Final Report* (Rockville, MD: King Research Inc., 1986), p. 402. (ED 279 350)

[42] ibid.

[43] ibid., p. 403.

Palmour had done for BCPL. Palmour was the principal investigator for the planning manual, and BCPL director Charles Robinson served as an advisor to the King Research team.

The director of BCPL, as well as a number of librarians who worked at that library system during the 1970s and early 1980s, were active in PLA offices and committees. The networking in which these individuals engaged may have been a factor in bringing the first planning and measurement manuals to publication. It is probably a safe assumption that such networking was instrumental in bringing Gene Palmour into the picture.

Once ALA had given PLA the authority to seek funding for its "Process of Standards Development" Project, the GGS Committee called for proposals from the research community. Palmour's proposal was selected and it was used as the basis for developing a proposal for funding to be submitted to the Office of Education. The GGS Committee held a number of working sessions during the time that the proposal was being revised. One of these took place at Rutgers. In attendance were Blassingame and Lynch, who was still in residence as a doctoral student. Also at the meeting was another Rutgers doctoral student, Charles McClure, who would later play a significant role in the development of the PLDP manuals.[44] De Prospo and Bloss (chair of the GGS Committee) were among a number of individuals who served as consultants on the Palmour project. Thus, in a somewhat subtle manner, the connection with the earlier work at Rutgers continued throughout the development of the planning manuals.

The first proposal that PLA submitted to the Office of Education was not approved for funding. In a 1986 speech in Montreal, Lynch (who worked on the proposal that was eventually funded) indicated that one of the problems that the Office of Education identified in the original proposal

> concerns a matter which continues to haunt PLA: Does PLA believe that if public libraries know how to use a planning process to set local goals and objectives, develop strategies, and evaluate progress that they will not need national standards? Or does PLA believe that once many public libraries go through the planning process, the results can be used to formulate a new set of national standards? The proposal was fuzzy on this point. It was titled "The Process of Standards Development for Community Library Service" but described only the work which would be done to document the procedures Gene Palmour used in Baltimore County, test them in several different sites, and

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44 Mary Jo Lynch, "Planning and Measurement of Library Services," p.5.

produce a publication describing a planning process for public libraries.[45]

PUBLICATION OF THE PLANNING MANUALS

A Planning Process

In the fall of 1976, Mary Jo Lynch left Rutgers to assume the newly created position within ALA that involved managing the special projects of PLA, ALTA, and RASD. It was in this position that she was given the responsibility for revising the rejected proposal. "Some of the people who wrote the proposal believed in the primary importance of local planning but others in PLA, together with some of the officials at [the Office of Education] believed in national standards. . . . I got different advice from different people but finally chose to modify the proposal so that the focus was clearly on producing a manual for planning. We left in a few remarks about using results later for national standards, but that possibility was not a major part of the proposal."[46]

The revised proposal was submitted on October 13, 1976. Prior to receipt of funding in September 1977, the planning concepts developed by the consultants from King Research, Inc. were tested at the Baltimore County Public Library. According to one of our interviews, the decision to test at BCPL was made because "they were willing to help foot the bill" at a time when PLA had no money. When federal funding in the amount of $140,000 was finally approved, it was for an eighteen-month project to develop manuals, field test them, and produce a publication. Palmour, working for King Research, Inc., directed the project, with the assistance of Marcia C. Bellassai and Nancy Van House De Wath.

During the time PLA was seeking a solution to the problem it had identified (what to do about national standards), the major change agent role was being played within the association by the Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee. The networking between this group, the Executive Boards of PLA and ALA, the scholarly and research communities, the government funding agency, and the practitioners in the field brought the innovation to the point at which the planning manual could be produced.

Once the decision had been made to publish such a manual, however, a new committee assumed the linking role. This was the project's Steering Committee, which served in a liaison capacity between the researchers and PLA, and also provided advice and counsel to the research team. The GGS

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[45] ibid., p. 8.
[46] ibid., p. 9.

Committee and the PLA Research Committee were somewhat annoyed at this arrangement, apparently. A letter from Shirley Mills-Fischer (9/12/82) described the creation of an Advisory Committee for Research on Public Library Planning (ACRPLP) in 1979 as the result of complaints by the other two committees that they were "left out of the development of *A Planning Process.* " The ACRPLP was composed of members from the GGS and Research Committees.

There are obvious parallels to the RD&D diffusion model in that the GGS Committee took the innovation through the research and development stages, while it became the task of the Steering Committee to see it through the "packaging" stage. There are also elements of the Problem-Solving model as well: the initial perception of the problem came from the practitioner community itself (including those who are active in PLA's committee structure). The change agent role played by librarians working through PLA was strengthened by interaction with the research community (which helped with problem solving). Without the relationships among practicing librarians, PLA , ALA, researchers, and others, development of the planning process may never have occurred, thus lending support to Havelock's concept of the importance of linkages. Although the present study did not explore formally whether PLA members have become more sophisticated consumers of research as a result of their experience, a case could probably be made for a heightened awareness among public librarians in PLA of the usefulness of enlisting the aid of the research community.

The PLA Steering Committee for the Palmour project held its first meeting on November 8, 1977 in Washington, DC. Committee members discussed performance measures as well as the development of the new planning manuals, indicating that the influence of De Prospo's work had not waned. Palmour made monthly progress reports to PLA throughout the course of the project. The Steering Committee made quarterly reports to PLA. ALA gave quarterly reports written by Lynch (who served as project consultant) to the Office of Education.

During the next seven months, while the King Research team was working on the planning manual, the PLA Steering Committee suggested that an additional field test of the proposed manuals be held at another site. The concern at the time seemed to be that there were no smaller public libraries among the test sites, yet the process was supposed to be applicable to any size library. This concern continued even though an additional field test was conducted at the Prince William County (Virginia) Public Library (which was supposed to be representative of the small library.) In reviewing the final report submitted to the Department of Education, Adrienne Chute of the Division of Library Programs, remarked that "A serious problem in the project is its apparent nonapplicability to small rural public libraries, which account for 5000 out of approximately 8000 public libraries in the United States....

Our impression is that this is a viable process for larger public libraries, but not for small. We recommend that the author delete the concept that this planning process is applicable to small libraries" (Letter from Chute to Lynch, 4/24/80).

Our interviews suggested that there is a prevailing belief among many librarians that small libraries lack both the expertise and resources necessary to engage in any sort of formal planning. The majority of public libraries "serve tiny populations with small budgets and small staffs. That kind of library doesn't do planning."

The Steering Committee had requested that the researchers conduct an evaluation seminar to allow library leaders to evaluate the drafts of the manual and to introduce the manual to the library community. At the 1978 ALA Midwinter Conference, a proposal was drafted requesting that the Office of Education fund an additional test site and provide funding for the evaluation seminar. The proposal was eventually funded in June 1978.

At the same Midwinter Conference, Palmour gave a presentation to the GGS Committee, and he and Robinson presented a rough draft of the needs assessment section of the manual to the Steering Committee. Possible field test sites were discussed at the Steering Committee meeting.

Output Measures for Public Libraries (OMPL-1)

The Steering Committee met with the King researchers and project consultants on January 30, 1978 to discuss the role of performance measures in the manual. Lamar Veatch suggested that, "even before the publication of the *Planning Process,* it was recognized that a weak link in the procedure for developing community-based standards was a general inaccessibility to methods for collecting and using data that describe what a library gives to a community (output), rather than what a library receives from a community (input)."[47]

The GGS Committee proposed to the PLA Executive Board that performance measures be established for public libraries by September 1982. Originally, the GGS Committee had planned to break the task of producing a performance measurement manual into sections assigned to members of the Committee. The PLA Publication Committee approved the publication of what the GGS Committee had called "Methods of Output Measures." The committee identified the measures to be included in the manual, but the actual construction of the manual proved to be too time consuming.

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[47] Lamar Veatch, "Output Measures for Public Libraries," *Public Libraries*, 21, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 11.

Meanwhile, Charles Robinson had obtained funding for the project and the GGS Committee assigned a subcommittee chaired by Carolyn Anthony to supervise the development of the planned manual. Anthony had been working on performance measures at Baltimore County Public Library. Because of Palmour's pre-1978 work at Baltimore County, that library system can be considered an "innovator" and "early adopter" both of planning methods and performance measures. Linkages between BCPL and PLA continued as the planning process evolved into the Public Library Development Program. As staff moved from BCPL to accept management positions in other libraries, the concepts of planning and evaluation moved with them.

The influence that this network of former BCPL staff has had on diffusing PLA's planning techniques was not specifically examined in the study. However, there are indications that utilization of the manuals was facilitated in libraries where former BCPL staff had relocated. In a report on the *Diffusion of Innovations in Library and Information Science* (which considers technological innovations primarily, but also includes performance measures as one of the innovations studied), Griffiths et al. identified connections to what they termed the "Maryland Mafia" as a facilitating factor in the adoption of innovation.[48]

The Anthony subcommittee consisted of only two members from GGS, plus representatives from contributing state agencies and libraries according to our interviews. It contracted with Douglas Zweizig and Eleanor Jo (Joey) Rodger from King Research, who had written a proposal for the development of the manual. Zweizig had worked with the Oklahoma State Library in developing performance measures, and Rodger's work with King Research had involved long range planning for libraries.

> The PLA subcommittee that advised the project took an extremely practical approach to their task. . . . The result is a manual of twelve chapters, each of which describes the data elements needed to construct a measure, the procedures for obtaining the data, and ways to interpret the results. Data collection forms are included in many chapters, and the work concludes with summary forms and a glossary. As each measure was discussed in committee meetings, additional refinements to the data were frequently suggested.[49]

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48 Griffiths, et al., p. 362.

49 Lynch, "Measurement of Public Library Activity," p. 392.

The final draft of the output measures manual was field tested in five libraries in the late summer and fall of 1981 by King Research. It was subsequently approved by the GGS Committee, which gave it its title. After the manual was published, dissemination was directed by GGS, which by that time was being chaired by Anthony.

Lynch described the origin of the output measures manual this way: "APP told librarians that they should use measurement techniques whenever possible and referred them to De Prospo and to Lancaster for ideas. But the PLA Goals, Guidelines and Standards Committee saw immediately that the chapter on measurement [Chapter 13] was the weakest component of the planning manual. The committee worked out a plan for something better, and Charles Robinson of BCPL organized a small coalition of libraries and State Library Agencies to provide funds for the work. Again King Research got the contract and this time the consultants were Douglas Zweizig and Joey Rodger. . . . I served on the advisory committee for the output measures project and flew to Baltimore several times to meet with the committee and the field test librarians who came from Maryland and Pennsylvania."[50]

Dissemination Plans

The earliest detailed description of dissemination plans we found in PLA's files was contained in a letter from Lynch to the Steering Committee dated 9/25/78. The plans were to advertise heavily in public library journals, to provide assistance to libraries in the use of *A Planning Process,* and to use conference workshops, guides to the process, and case studies for dissemination and training.

According to a 1979 ALA Quarterly Report to the Office of Education, the Steering Committee suggested that, immediately after publication of the manual, PLA should concentrate on its dissemination, on training people in the use of the manual, and on the production of a guide to the planning process and performance measures.

At the 1979 ALA Annual Conference the Steering Committee convened for the last time. They met with the King Research team to discuss completion of the project and follow-up activities to disseminate the manual. They had before them a memo sent to the committee by Lynch two weeks before. The Lynch memo (6/10/79) suggested that PLA replicate the planned 1980 ALA Conference presentation elsewhere. She also suggested that PLA get endorsements for the manual from organizations such as the International City Managers Association, and that funding be obtained for a consulting service to assist planning libraries that would be operated from ALA

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50 Lynch,"Planning and Measurement of Library Services," p. 10.

headquarters. Finally, Lynch's memo suggested that PLA produce guidelines for public libraries based on local planning that would replace national standards. She felt that data collection funds for such a project might be obtained through the Higher Education Act.

Among the other topics discussed by the Steering Committee were: (1) how to help state library agencies to use the planning process in developing state standards and (2) the advisability of sending brochures to all public libraries and state library agencies along with an order form for *A Planning Process*. The committee indicated its intention to place an ad with an order form for *A Planning Process* in *Public Libraries*. It planned to inform the Council of State Governments, the League of Cities and Towns, the Council of Mayors, the National Academy of Public Administration, and the Organization of State Budget Directors in the hope of getting endorsements form these agencies. The objective was to further strengthen PLA's efforts to get individual libraries to adopt the planning process.

The day after the final Steering Committee meeting, Lynch wrote a letter to the PLA Executive Board requesting them to endorse local planning and the development of state standards based on data collected by planning libraries. She also repeated her suggestion that PLA establish a planning office at ALA headquarters to train state library agency consultants, to provide short term consultation with individual librarians, and to produce national standards based on the data collected by planning libraries.

An ALA Preconference on the planning process, which included informal audience interaction, was held in 1979. Robinson's keynote speech for the preconference was published in the Fall 1979 issue of *Public Libraries*. Also at this conference the PLA sponsored an informal meeting including a panel discussion with the directors of the libraries chosen as test sites for the manual.

On July 20th, the date was set for the Training and Evaluation Seminar, generally referred to as the "Wagon Wheel Conference" because of its location. (The conference was held at the Wagon Wheel Resort in Rockton, Illinois, from September 23 - 27, 1979.) The idea was to attract library leaders for training in how to use the manual and how to train others to use it. It was also a chance for library leaders to evaluate the final draft of the manual, discuss its impact on the development of national standards, and discuss the dissemination and implementation of *A Planning Process*.

Twenty-eight people were invited to the seminar and the travel costs were paid by the federal grant. Participants included library directors, state librarians, state consultants, regional library system directors, trustees, and library educators.

It was about this time that Lynch, now head of the ALA Office for Research (OFR), suggested that the OFR monitor the use of the planning process by individual libraries with the assistance of a PLA Advisory

Committee. In a letter to the PLA Executive Director (10/10/79), Lynch volunteered the OFR to conduct a survey of planning libraries (i.e., those that were using the planning process). The survey would include interviews with library directors under the guidance of an advisory committee to be appointed by the PLA President and to be composed of GGS and PLA Research Committee members (the ACRPLP referred to earlier). The OFR and the Advisory Committee would work together to design and implement the proposed survey.

A letter by Shirley Mills-Fischer (10/20/79) detailed PLA's plans for dissemination of the manual. The plans included speeches at the ALTA Conference, the 1980 ALA Annual Conference, and state and regional library association conferences. Articles about the new manual were to appear in prominent library journals. Discussion groups for planning libraries were arranged for ALA's 1980 Midwinter and Annual Conferences. The discussions were to be conducted by PLA staff. After publication, PLA would hold training workshops for state library personnel and practitioners during the second half of 1980. The initial workshop would be conducted at an ALA Preconference in June. Plans for a short workshop for small libraries to be conducted by state consultants were also in the making.

The letter discussed Lynch's plans for collecting data on libraries that were using the process, with a special emphasis on data from small libraries. This letter also marked a return to the idea of developing tools for performance measurement, suggesting the creation of a national database of information, including output measures, collected by planning libraries. Mills-Fischer suggested that the PLA "Statement of Principles" be rewritten to include local planning and the development of output measures as basic principles for public libraries.

The Mills-Fischer letter (10/20/79) also suggested that a supplement to *A Planning Process* be considered, with a total revision of the manual to begin in the Spring of 1985. Other committees of PLA were also pursuing the idea of revising the manual or publishing a document that would provide alternatives for small libraries. The Publication Committee was considering the publication of a supplement to *A Planning Process* by the end of 1980. Lamar Veatch had suggested that he write a "Measurement Supplement to the Planning Process." The Small and Medium Sized Libraries Section of PLA (SMSL) announced in November that a special session of the ALA Annual Preconference would be devoted to the use of the planning process by small libraries.

Late in 1979 the PLA Executive Board met and approved plans for the OFR to design methods for collecting data on planning libraries and for state consultant workshops to be conducted by PLA. The OFR sent a final draft of its plans to members of the newly formed Advisory Committee in December 1979.

At the initial meeting of the ACRPLP during the 1980 ALA Midwinter Conference, the committee was given the charge to coordinate the activities of PLA in research pertaining to the planning process, to advise on such research projects, to monitor the projects, and to disseminate their findings. Furthermore, they were to identify additional needed research areas and projects. They discussed with Lynch what data to collect for monitoring the use of the manual and approved the plan for the OFR to design forms and procedures for such data collection.

ACRPLP suggested that, after a few years, *A Planning Process* be revised on the basis of feedback from planning libraries and continued research into the use of the manual. They suggested that additional planning aides be developed for planning libraries and discussed the role of state library agencies in the dissemination of the planning process.

A proposal was sent to the PLA Executive Board and discussed at ALA Midwinter in 1980 regarding the publication of a supplement to *A Planning Process* that would include the results of a survey of libraries that had used the process. The survey responses would be for the benefit of libraries intending to use the manual in the near future. In March, a draft survey questionnaire for the supplement was drawn up for approval by the GGS Committee.

The second meeting of the ACRPLP was at the 1980 ALA Annual Conference. At that time the committee approved the OFR's draft document on the collection of data relating to libraries that adopted the planning process. The document suggested that data from 100 planning libraries be collected through quarterly surveys, case studies, and phone interviews.

In 1980, the PLA Executive Board formally endorsed the move from national standards to local community-based planning, supplemented by state standards or guidelines. The PLA Executive Director was given the charge of developing a proposal for a workshop on the manual for PLA staff and board members.

The first broad dissemination of *A Planning Process* occurred at the ALA Annual Conference in 1980. Soon after, PLA President Robert Rohlf began giving speeches at a number of state library association meetings across the country. Charles Robinson also gave speeches during his term as president. Donald Sager, Agnes Griffen, and Kathleen Balcom were highly involved during their terms of office as well. Our interviews suggested that other presidents were less directly involved in promoting the planning process, but remained supportive. We were told that speeches on the planning process given by PLA presidents tended to be overviews of the project and largely motivational. When Nancy Bolt became president of PLA, she set in motion the chain of events that led to the Public Library Development Program (PLDP).

A list (dated 2/80) of seminars and conference programs to be conducted by the PLA President, the PLA Executive Director, and Lynch includes two regional library association meetings and numerous state meetings.

By September of 1980, PLA President Robert Rohlf was scheduled to speak at more that 20 state and regional library association meetings and excerpts from his speeches were to appear in the Spring 1981 issue of *Public Libraries*. The Fall 1980 issue was to include an article advocating local standards development as opposed to national standards. Concurrent with attempts to disseminate the planning manual, PLA continued to engage in the process of "re-education" of practitioners in order to change their thinking about national standards. This strategy might be characterized in terms of Chin and Benne's "normative-educative" approach.

Also in September, Lynch suggested to the ACRPLP that they revise their data collection plans because of the low rate of return of the user form that was printed inside the back page of the manual.

At the Executive Board meeting on October 28, Peggy O'Donnell reported her plans for the presentation of several regional workshops across the nation. The Board approved the presentation of workshops for between 30 and 60 people, discussed the need for an advisory/resources task force, and suggested five sites for the workshops. The workshops were to be limited to practitioners working at planning libraries and/or libraries that would soon implement the planning process.

The GGS Committee set up a subcommittee, comprised mostly of library directors, to deal with publicity and dissemination of the manual. The decision was made not to go for national dissemination to individual libraries, but to "train the trainers." PLA organized workshops for state agency personnel. It contracted with Barbara Conroy and Ken Fischer to conduct three regional workshops for state consultants. A task force was established to oversee the workshops.

A report from Lynch to the PLA Executive Board at ALA's Midwinter Conference stated there were 35 planning libraries in 20 states by the end of 1980. The report also discussed the involvement of library schools as resources for consultants and workshop sponsors for the dissemination of the planning process. Lynch mentioned that state libraries were conducting their own workshops. Data collection and summary reports of the data collected were being planned by the OFR.

At this same ALA Midwinter Meeting in January 1981, three major avenues of dissemination for *A Planning Process* were stressed: regional workshops, ALA and state conference programs, and articles in *Public Libraries*. At the final meeting of the ACRPLP state and regional pre-conference programs were planned at several sites. The ACRPLP was officially dissolved in May 1981, "because it failed to work" (letter from Mills-Fischer, 9/12/82).

Rohlf continued to give speeches whenever he was asked. Two programs were planned for the ALA Annual Conference in June. Earlier, during 1980, a regular column devoted to the PLA Planning Process had been established in *Public Libraries*.

Members of the GGS Committee were encouraged to give presentations on the planning process whenever possible. Profiles of members willing to give presentations were compiled by PLA. These stated the conditions under which a member would conduct a presentation. Inquiries were often relayed to individual members, with little coordination being attempted by PLA staff.

In addition to these channels of dissemination, it should be mentioned that some of the people associated with the development of the manuals were hired by individual libraries as private consultants. In this way, the planning process was disseminated directly to the local level.

The first of the Conroy-Fischer consultants workshops was conducted in August 1981. The workshops were designed to describe and interpret *A Planning Process* as a planning tool for local libraries. The manual was presented as a "basic but flexible tool to be employed depending on the circumstances." The idea was to show the consultants how to use their skills in assisting libraries in using *A Planning Process* in a variety of situations. The Eastern Regional Workshop included consultants from 16 states and Canada and was sponsored by PLA, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), and the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA). It lasted four days. In September the workshop was repeated in Indianapolis at the Fatima Retreat.

The first practitioner's workshop was conducted by Peggy O'Donnell in October 1981. Follow-up letters were sent to the participants that informed them of the availability of planning packets produced by PLA from documents that planning libraries had sent to PLA Headquarters. Participants were also told that *Public Libraries* would be a primary source of planning news. The follow-up letters included a survey regarding the workshops, a glossary of planning process terms, and order forms for a film strip on the planning process. The librarians were also informed of the progress being made on the development of performance measures. Several additional workshops were given before the end of the year.

The PLA Research Committee was reminded in a memo from the PLA Executive Board that they were expected to take a larger role in the dissemination, monitoring, and revision of *A Planning Process* and in future research. They were informed that the PLA staff was currently monitoring the progress of the dissemination effort. The memo gave approval for the creation of a survey to monitor use of the planning process by public libraries.

About this same time, ALA officially announced that the OFR was collecting documents from libraries using *A Planning Process* and would make packets of them available to libraries that were just beginning to plan.

Documents included in the packets were selected by the planning libraries and included survey forms, goals and objectives, final reports, and so forth. In addition, the OFR was exploring additional ways it might monitor libraries using *A Planning Process.*

The GGS Committee sent out a survey to try to identify how many libraries had implemented the planning process. PLA itself, however, was unable to sustain the necessary commitment of staff time to keep up with the collection and dissemination of data about planning libraries. Efforts along these lines were eventually abandoned.

At ALA's 1981 Midwinter Conference the first meeting was held of the PLA Planning Process Discussion Group, chaired by David Smith. The Public Library Reporter Committee met and discussed publishing a condensed version of *A Planning Process.*

The ALA Annual Conference in 1981 had two programs on the planning process. The Public Library Reporter Committee meeting once again discussed a condensed version of *A Planning Process* and designated Mary Ann Heneghen as liaison for the project. The PLA Publications Committee discussed Veatch's "Output Measures and the Planning Process" and Muller's "Small Public Libraries and the Planning Process," which was to be a print version of the SMSL Conference program.

The PLA Executive Board asked the PLA Research Committee to look into a revision of *A Planning Process* near the end of July 1981. Mary Jo Detweiler was assigned to write a proposal for the revision. The GGS Committee was given the job of developing performance measures based on the planning process. Also at the end of July the OFR transferred data collected from planning libraries to PLA headquarters and discontinued its data collection activities. The PLA office staff then became the central coordinators of information collection and dissemination for the planning project.

Claudya Muller's book[51] on small public libraries and planning was published in the early part of 1982 and had sold 250 copies by May.

The PLA Executive Board was kept informed on matters relating to the dissemination of the planning process throughout the 1980s. It approved all monies devoted to the dissemination of the process and funded the committees that were established to plan and supervise dissemination. Many of the Board members had been involved in the development of the first manual and later many became actively involved in the development of the PLDP.

From our search of the files at the PLA Headquarters, it became clear that much of what went on during the development and dissemination of the first

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[51]Claudya Muller, *The Small Public Library and the Planning Process,* Chicago: American Library Association, 1982.

planning process was facilitated greatly by the efforts of PLA's Executive Director.

ALA and PLA officers and committee members gave a considerable number of presentations after the publication of *A Planning Process* and would continue to do so throughout 1981. The Executive Board members did their share of private and informal dissemination through workshops and contacts at conferences. Several of the people whom we interviewed made mention of the fact that PLA is not highly centralized and that much of the committee work "operated in a sense outside PLA in terms of forgetting that we were fully accountable to them."

Articles were published in *Public Libraries* and presentations were given at state and national library conferences. The dissemination plans for *Output Measures for Public Libraries,* drawn up by GGS, were submitted to the PLA Executive Board which gave its approval.

In 1982, PLA established the Database Advisory Task Force. The purpose of this task force was to work with the Library Resources Center at the University of Illinois to broaden the participation of planning libraries in providing data on their planning efforts and to increase the use of the collected data by planning libraries.

In August 1982, PLA distributed a flier announcing the availability of planning packets through the Library Resources Center at the University of Illinois. By the end of the year 146 requests for planning packets had been received. Planning packets had been contributed from 31 libraries that had completed a cycle of the planning process.

The people at the University of Illinois continued their data collecting activities. When they developed a "computerized database of statistical information on public libraries," PLA's Executive Board was concerned that this project, funded by the University of Illinois, might be duplicating other PLA statistics gathering projects.

At the 1982 ALA Annual Conference the PLA Executive Board approved the development and publication of a revision of *A Planning Process*. They also announced the planned publication of a condensed manual in two years. The GGS Committee was put in charge of the production of the two proposed manuals, the revised and the condensed.

In September 1982, the PLA Executive Board approved the publication of *Measure for Measure,* which was to consist of the proceedings from a program given in North Carolina. GGS was given responsibility for publication.

The Executive Board also asked the Public Libraries Principles Task Force to present a document and conduct a hearing on standards at the 1983 ALA Midwinter Conference. It was also decided in September that the PLA Education for Public Libraries Committee would not participate in any further dissemination of *A Planning Process* due to other commitments.

In December 1982, the Executive Committee was still making plans for a revision of the manual. A GGS Subcommittee had been established to revise the manual by 1985. Another subcommittee was working on a simpler version of the manual. Revisions were being discussed for *Small Public Libraries and the Planning Process* and the output measures manual. Planning packets were still being disseminated through the PLA Headquarters. Plans were also being made to microfiche the planning packets and to produce a book on which libraries had adopted and adapted the manual, but these projects were never completed due to lack of funds and a switch of emphasis to the development of new manuals.

A Task Force was established in 1982 to set up a PLA planning and evaluation office. The PLA Planning Process Financial Development Task Force estimated the cost of such an office would be $250,000 over two years. The office would offer workshops and fee-based consultant services. At this time there were several committees and individuals involved in offering workshops and consulting. It was eventually decided that PLA did not have the financial or human resources to operate an office for these services without the help of urban and larger libraries, state agencies, and regional systems.

The GGS was also pursuing the collection of output measures data for a computerized database and asked Fred Neighbors to develop software which could store, retrieve, and manipulate data resulting from user surveys conducted by individual libraries using *Output Measures for Public Libraries.* The GGS also asked Rich Murphy to develop and publicize revised forms for collecting output measures data. The forms were to be published in *Public Libraries* and distributed at the 1983 PLA Annual Conference. Individual GGS members were to contact state organizations and offer output measure seminars and programs, or any other assistance the states might want.

Efforts at disseminating *A Planning Process* were continued in 1983. The PLA President's Program at the ALA Annual Conference that year was to be devoted to the planning process. At the same time, however, developments were occurring that would lead to the production of new manuals, and to the abandonment of further revisions or condensations of *A Planning Process.* One final attempt was made to publish a simplified planning manual, however, as consideration was given in October 1983 to publishing a manuscript by Michael Piper called "A Planning Guide for Small Public Libraries." Nothing apparently came of this attempt.

Throughout 1983, PLA committees were involved in disseminating information on local planning. In particular, the PLA Board had given the PLA Planning Process Discussion Group the specific charge to provide new information on local planning. The Research Committee continued to monitor the development of a database on output measures and community surveys through its Public Library Data Base Advisory Subcommittee. This

subcommittee had been appointed earlier by the chair of the Research Committee.

As late as January of 1985, the PLA Executive Committee was still suggesting the use of the planning packets collected from planning libraries for the production of a list of recommended planning documents, the provision of microfiche copies of planning packets to libraries that were just beginning the planning process, an index to the collection of planning packets, and the production of a list of mission statements written by planning libraries. The Executive Committee also called for the collection of more documents for the files (PLA Executive Committee, Second Session Minutes, 2/2/85).

Barriers to Effective Dissemination

The people we interviewed mentioned several problems that hindered PLA as it attempted to carry out its dissemination plans. The Association lacked the funds and office personnel to carry out all of its plans without relying on state organizations and the commitment of private consultants. It did not have the necessary resources to develop different workshops for different audiences, nor could it limit workshop audiences without reducing income.

The general workshops and presentations given at ALA conferences or state library association conferences failed to generate the expected level of enthusiasm among the attending librarians. As one of the people we interviewed stated, "There was this sense that everybody else would see and share our excitement. And then the people would come in and they would need to be sold." The introductory workshops did not contain enough in-depth information to satisfy people who were already engaged in planning or had seriously considered using the PLA planning process. At the same time such workshops failed to reach those who needed to be sold on the whole idea through a different type of presentation.

From the beginning, PLA saw the state and regional organizations as the proper disseminators to the local level. The developers of the planning process thought of state agencies as "important partners" with "enough clout at the local level" to be the primary disseminators of the planning process. They felt that PLA's role in dissemination lay in training the trainers (state and regional system consultants), and in the refinement and further development of the planning tools. Although several agencies did attempt to disseminate the planning process to public libraries within their states, the partnership envisioned by PLA did not come to pass.

The perceived lack of enthusiasm for the first planning process by state and regional organizations was considered a major barrier to dissemination of

the manuals by some of the people we interviewed. These agencies were perceived as having the ability to work closely with individual libraries and as being in a position to deal with the problems libraries might encounter in applying the planning process. Our interviews indicated that those involved with the innovation recognized early on that small libraries could not set up planning committees and do community needs assessments without the help of state or system consultants. Without state level cooperation, dissemination directly from the national level would be extremely difficult for PLA to accomplish. Our interviews indicated that the developers felt that it was the job of the state libraries to help individual libraries "and what PLA should be doing is training the trainers. That we should do workshops for state library staff, which we did. We should do workshops for regional library consultants so that they can go out and provide this assistance free."

At one time it had been hoped that federal monies would be made available for libraries wishing to implement the planning process. It was envisioned that this money would provide a "great groundswell of people who needed consultants," but neither the money nor the groundswell materialized. Private consultants, many closely associated with PLA or King Research, were paid by individual libraries to conduct workshops on the planning process; but the demand for such consultants was not high.

Although numerous workshops were conducted, some sponsored by PLA and some presented by private consultants, not all of the workshops were well received. "California, for example, did not participate at all in the first wave of the planning process. And apparently, what we understood was, it was the way it was presented to them... some of the presentations did not go over well. And [this was particularly the case in] some of the western states."

Smaller libraries, according to our interviews, were simply not interested in adopting the planning manual. "They weren't doing it [planning] at all. I just never got the impression that there was that much demand by the smaller libraries to do it. I mean, I think most of them were just too intimidated by it." The manual was "difficult to read." Librarians "felt that they needed to go literally from the first step to the end and got bogged down." They "used surveys straight from the book without regard to their appropriateness to local conditions." They "never understood the need to plan, nor the benefits of planning." There was nothing "to motivate small libraries" to use the planning process and they generally thought that "things were working fine in the library as it was."

PLA had also hoped that the process would be adopted by the "leading libraries" and their use of the process would influence other libraries to adopt. The feeling was that "there was a kind of dynamism about what was going on that would spread, even if only a few libraries went through it."

It must also be mentioned that PLA's attention during all of this time was not focused exclusively on the planning manuals. Its members were actively involved in other programs, some of which were given a higher priority at times, depending in part on the composition of the Executive Board. Yet the commitment to community based planning and evaluation on the part of a relatively small cadre of individuals in PLA, who were strategically placed in the Association's committee structure, made it a relative certainty that PLA would not abandon the effort to further develop and disseminate its innovation.

PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PLDP)

In a 1986 Library Journal article, Kathleen Mehaffey Balcom, then President-Elect of the Public Library Association, announced that PLA would unveil its "major new management tool" at the following year's ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. "The work, called the Public Library Development Project (PLDP), is guided by PLA's New Standards Task Force. The completion of the project and its introduction to the profession will certainly be a major objective of my presidency."[52]

Balcom's article attempted to answer questions posed by practitioners concerning "in what direction PLA is going and how the new project will relate to standards and existing planning and performance measures."[53] The article emphasized PLA's continued commitment to planning as opposed to standards, and reassured public librarians that the problems they had identified with the first planning and output measures manuals were being addressed by developers of the PLDP. Among the problems mentioned by Balcom are the following:

1. The amount of emphasis placed on surveys by *A Planning Process*, which had caused its users to collect data indiscriminately without first identifying their research questions, and without

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[52] Kathleen Mehaffey Balcom, "The Promise of the Public Library Development Program: 'To Concentrate and Strengthen'," *Library Journal*, 11 (June 15, 1986): 36.

[53] ibid.

developing goals related to the data collected. As a result, many librarians lost the impetus to plan before they ever got to the part of the process that required taking action--the development of strategies.

2. The difficulty people in smaller libraries experienced as they tried to use the manuals, which were not specifically designed with the needs of smaller libraries in mind, yet had been promoted as being applicable regardless of library size.

3. The validity of the output measures, especially the availability measures, which had been questioned by people from the research community.

Balcom assessed the impact of the first set of manuals and the potential impact of PLDP in this way:

> Even though librarians debate aspects of both the *Planning Process* and *Output Measures*, many are pleased with the impact of the publications in the field. The publications introduced librarians to a new way of looking at the services the library provides and offered ideas about how those services might be improved. *Planning Process* and *Output Measures* have made more librarians aware of the need for library research and put some basic survey tools at their disposal. Although researchers may debate the technical issues involved in the studies, librarians are pleased to be able to determine indicators of their service impact.
>
> PLDP will build on the positive elements of its predecessors. The new manuals will provide a package of effective tools which will allow each library to enter the planning and evaluation cycle at the point which is right for them.[54]

By utilizing the journal literature to alert practitioners well in advance of publication, PLA was following the pattern it had set prior to the appearance of the earlier manuals. Through the literature, PLA continued to press for widespread acceptance of its philosophical position: instead of asking for national standards (which were unable to take local differences into account), public librarians should be engaging in a formal process of community-based planning and evaluation. In addition, the association used the literature to reassure practitioners that their complaints about the first manuals had been heard and heeded.

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[54]ibid., p. 40.

In the Summer 1987 issue of Public Libraries, Carolyn Anthony characterized PLDP as providing "Options and Opportunities":

> Four years in the making, the program describes a process of planning and review that can lead to continuous development. Planning, role setting, measurement, and a national public library data service comprise the program. Two components are presented in *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures*, a new publication that outlines a fresh approach to the planning process. *Output Measures for Public Libraries*, second edition, bears a close resemblance to its predecessor, but includes substantial new sections on measurement, data collection, and analysis as well as interpretation and use of measurement results.... Intended to be useful in the public library with at least one professional, PLDP aims to guide the library and community in making choices among options and opportunities. A chapter of the new planning manual is devoted to selecting library service roles.[55]

By referring to libraries "with at least one professional," the Anthony article, as well as statements in the manuals themselves, indicated that PLA had resolved to its own satisfaction the problem of how to address the needs of small libraries with respect to planning. It is interesting that the term "one professional" rather than "one librarian" was used. Although "professional" is not defined, the assumption is that the library will be large enough to pay the salary of a person with a masters degree in librarianship. Many of the libraries in our study population would not fall into this category. In fact, the majority of public libraries may well not qualify. However, the suggestion is made in the manuals that libraries too small to plan on their own might be helped in the implementation of planning and measurement by the state agency or a regional library system.

According to one of our interviews, the approach taken to get the very small libraries to use the PLDP is to get them "to take a step in order to move forward, and knowing what step to offer them to get them into the [planning] cycle is best achieved by state consultants and agencies." Another of those we interviewed stated, "...we felt that a lot of what happens or doesn't happen in terms of the development of the smaller libraries depends on the states."

Having gone through a dissemination attempt with the first manuals, PLA was by 1984 more aware of the need to involve state agencies early in the development process so that their cooperation would be more likely when

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[55]Carolyn A. Anthony, "The Public Library Development Program: Options and Opportunities," *Public Libraries*, 26 (1987): 55.

it came time to disseminate PLDP to the local level. PLA had sought and obtained federal funding for the development of *A Planning Process*. The involvement of state agencies and individual libraries in the development phase of that manual was minimal. In the case of PLDP, federal funding could not be obtained. This may have worked to the advantage of the dissemination process, as development was funded by state agencies and public libraries. Input from these and other groups was actively solicited and all were kept informed of how development was progressing.

New Standards Task Force

The appointment of the New Standards Task Force (NSTF) marks another contrast in development strategy between the two sets of planning manuals. The NSTF, chaired by Karen Krueger, was first appointed by PLA President Nancy Bolt in 1983. As the name indicates, the charge to the task force was to:

> make recommendations on the feasibility and desirability of new standards for public libraries. Their recommendation to the PLA Board was to continue on the path started by the Planning Process for Public Libraries and not to return to the more directive standards of the past. At the same time, the Task Force made specific recommendations about the type and level of assistance that was needed from the national association for local libraries wishing to improve their performance.[56]

The members of the task force represented state libraries, library directors, and people who had worked closely with smaller and medium-sized libraries during the dissemination of *A Planning Process*. Most of the members of the NSTF had been actively involved with either developing or using the first two manuals.

In May of 1984, PLA submitted a draft proposal to the Department of Education (DOE) to fund what was still being thought of as a revision of *A Planning Process* . At the ALA annual conference in June, the GGS committee discussed the revision of the manual, as well as a "small libraries" version of it. In addition, a revision of OMPL-1 was being discussed.

Meanwhile, the NSTF was discussing the feasibility of new standards, along with the development of a national database of output measures, and the

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[56]Public Library Association, "The Public Library Development Program: A Review and Status Report, April 5, 1986," (Chicago: PLA, 1986): 3

possibility of incorporating the concept of role statements into the planning process.

The NSTF was greatly influenced by a paper written by Lowell Martin outlining suggested alternative roles for the Free Library of Philadelphia.[57] Martin's idea that libraries should select a limited number of roles that they can best fulfill for their communities eventually evolved into PLDP's role setting concept. The task force was also aware of a publication aimed at small libraries, written by Nancy Bolt and Corinne Johnson for the Massachusetts State Library. Later published by ALA, this manual adapted the planning process for smaller libraries and included the concept of role setting.[58]

The New Standards Task Force was originally to meet for one year. At the end of that time, the task force recommended the production of new planning tools for public libraries. The feeling was that "more than just a revision of the first two manuals was needed; a new approach to planning was being sought." The new approach included a shift in emphasis from data collection to role setting and a closer relationship between the planning process and the output measures. The PLDP was designed "as a tight package so that the planning library could develop a planning cycle that linked planning directly with evaluation measures." Whereas the first two manuals were developed at two separate times by two different research teams, the two PLDP manuals were developed simultaneously by a single group of researchers. The NSTF recommendations about PLDP were approved and it was decided that the task force should be retained to organize and oversee the development of the new planning tools.

The Research Committee of PLA responded to the NSTF's proposed revision of the methodology presented in APP with the suggestion that the NSTF attempt to make the manual "easier for inexperienced planning libraries," develop better survey tools, and include a section on how to work with data analysis consultants (Minutes of PLA Research Committee, 6/25/84). This same document mentioned that the NSTF should clarify that standards are determined at the local level. It should also supervise procedures for the compilation of data for a national database on output measures that could be easily accessed by librarians.

In August of 1984, the DOE rejected the proposal to fund the revised planning process manuals. This set in motion an "all out blitz" of state library agencies and individual libraries to raise the necessary funds to support the PLDP. Charles Robinson once again spearheaded the fund raising effort. He gave several presentations to state libraries by the end of the year, soliciting

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[57]Lowell Martin. "The Public Library: Middle Age Crisis or Old Age?" *Library Journal* 108 (1983): 17-23.

[58]Nancy N. Bolt and Corinne Johnson, *Options for Small Public Libraries in Massachusetts: Recommendations and a Planning Guide* (Chicago: ALA, 1985).

funds. Initially, COSLA and the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) donated some $80,000.

According to a status report sent out by PLA in 1986, "The project officially began August 1, 1985. It is scheduled to be completed January 31, 1987. At that time, the copy for planning, role-setting, and measurements manuals will be ready to send to the publisher. Publication is expected to occur prior to the 1987 Annual ALA Conference."[59]

As soon as funds had become available, an executive committee of the NSTF began interviewing potential consultants who would be hired to produce the new manuals. Charles McClure (University of Oklahoma) was chosen as the project's principle investigator. He selected Zweizig (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Van House (University of California, Berkeley), and Lynch (ALA Office for Research) to work with him on developing the manuals.

While McClure was not directly involved in the development of APP, he had worked with De Prospo as a PhD student at Rutgers, was familiar with the concept of local planning and measurement, and had worked with the Oklahoma State Library to develop state standards based on output measures and the planning process. Zweizig had written and developed OMPL-1, worked with McClure in Oklahoma, and with several state libraries on the development of state standards. Van House was at King Research at the time of the first planning project and had worked with Palmour on the APP manual. Lynch, of course, worked with the first project from conception to completion as the liaison between ALA, PLA, the Office of Education, and King Research. Later, Amy Owen (Deputy Utah State Librarian) joined the study team. She and McClure had worked together in Utah developing a planning process for small libraries in that state.

The investigators were guided throughout the project by the New Standards Task Force. The task force set a time table for the study team to follow and advised them on a continuous basis. According to our interviews, the NSTF communicated to the study team their "vision" of what was needed in order to produce the PLDP. They met periodically with the study team to discuss the development of PLDP; critiqued all the work that was being done; directed and assisted the study team's progress; tested the concepts; and approved or vetoed the work.

Thus the study team worked out the content and format of the manuals and developed the manuals under the watchful eye of NSTF. Even though there was not always complete coordination of activities between PLA and the NSTF, the association board remained supportive of the task force throughout the change from standards to new manuals, and throughout the terms of three presidents. In 1985, when the project was just getting started,

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[59]Public Library Association, p.4.

PLDP was given "Level II" Goal Status behind six Level I goals and with three other Level II goals (PLA Executive Board, Second Session Minutes, 2/2/85).

PLA provided financial support for the work of the task force. During her presidency, Bolt gave several presentations to library groups across the country, informing them of the progress of the NSTF. PLA also organized the initial dissemination of PLDP by setting up state agency workshops to train the trainers and by responding to requests for presentations on the PLDP from library organizations. PLA relied heavily, however, upon people involved with the development of the innovation to actually conduct these presentations.

Dissemination of PLDP

After the publication of the PLDP manuals, the job of supervising dissemination apparently came to rest with the GGS Committee. The committee created the PLDS Advisory Board to supervise the creation of the national data service for planning libraries, and to provide general supervision of future matters concerning the planning process. Once again, there was a perceived intrusion on "committee turf" as some members of the NSTF believed that turning dissemination responsibilities over to GGS might result in a discontinuity in the development process and be detrimental to the consistent presentation of the concepts of local planning and output measures. There was overlap of membership between the NSTF and GGS, but there was also conflict about what role each group should be performing. The GGS, it will be recalled, protested when it no longer had a meaningful role in the development of APP, once the project was turned over to Palmour and the Steering Committee. It was now the turn of the NSTF to find itself in the position of having brought the concept to fruition, only to have another group take over.

According to our interviews, GGS eventually redefined its role as disseminator of the manuals once they were produced, and was given that responsibility officially by PLA. As NSTF was putting the finishing touches on the PLDP, GGS was preparing for its publication and dissemination. GGS collected data on the adoption of the first two manuals, tried to determine why some states did not adopt the process, and put forth a plan for what they thought "ought to happen with [PLDP's] dissemination."

Those involved believed that there was a great deal of anticipation and interest in PLDP among practitioners. This was undoubtedly due to the press release decision made in 1985 by the NSTF. They determined that press releases were to be sent regularly to all ALA divisions, *American Libraries*, *Library Journal*, *Library Journal Hotline*, *Wilson Library Bulletin*, state library newsletter editors, state association newsletter editors, PLA section

officers, committee chairs, the Executive Board, financial sponsors, and to anyone else requesting information about the progress of PLDP.

Knowing that it was impossible for GGS or even PLA itself to handle a national dissemination effort, the NSTF reached the decision to produce a "trainers' manual that would guide people" in how to teach others to use the planning techniques. GGS saw the audience for PLDP as quite diverse, including trustees as well as library administrators and staffs. GGS Committee discussions centered on what types of audiences must be reached, what types of workshops would be appropriate to various types of audiences, and how PLA could provide resource people for each type of workshop.

The trainers manual that was eventually published was written by Peggy O'Donnell. Although GGS approved the final draft, the idea for the manual had come from NSTF. According to one of the people we interviewed, the manual "sold more copies than we anticipated. The effort was made to [publish the trainers' manual] not so much to make [training] uniform as to make it easy. One of the messages we hear from state library agencies is that their library development people do not have time to develop curricula. They simply don't. So a role for a national association is to develop that curricula, make it available, train those folks in how to use it, and then let them go ahead and do it." Another person we interviewed summed it up this way, "What the task force recommended to PLA was that the role of PLA was to train trainers who would be giving workshops at the state level. That the person you want training you in long range planning is somebody you can get on the phone and call when it all falls apart around you. It was decided that it was not an appropriate role for PLA to do PLDP workshops around the country."

Some state agencies, however, did not use the trainers' manual to replicate the workshops regionally or locally. Instead, they employed people who were associated with the development of PLDP as private consultants to conduct workshops within their states. It was speculated that these state agencies felt that the high profile of a consultant directly involved with the development of the PLDP would help to influence local libraries to adopt the manuals.

According to plans made at the 1986 ALA Midwinter Conference, the PLA president was expected to be the primary spokesperson at annual state and regional library association conferences. GGS suggested that programs at the regional level be directed toward those new to local planning, while programs at the national level would be directed at repeat users of the process to reassure them about the continuity of the concepts (GGS Committee minutes, 1/20/86). Both types of programs were to emphasize why there was a need for the PLDP, rather than being how to do it programs. The GGS committee also named the following as target groups for information about

PLDP: library trustees, library school deans, and library science faculty teaching planning courses.

The GGS committee prepared a detailed calendar of the dissemination activities it was planning for 1987 through 1990. Included on the calendar were numerous references to activities involving key sponsors of PLDP, such as COSLA and ASCLA. Although we did not find formally written goals and objectives for the diffusion of PLDP, it was obvious that a considerable amount of work went into developing diffusion plans, most of which were aimed at enlisting the aid of state agencies in order to reach libraries on the local level. Although PLA continued its dissemination efforts at state and regional conferences, the feeling was that "a partnership" must be forged "with those people [at state development agencies] or you won't get to the local level."

Our interviews also revealed that PLA was aware of the differing perceptions that local librarians had of their state agencies and that negative perceptions could easily create barriers to dissemination. While some local librarians had "a feeling that the state agency was out to do what it could to help libraries," others had "the attitude [that] the state is there to put obstacles in [their] paths."

Another person we interviewed noted that state agencies approached dissemination through a variety of styles and methods. "And some of them are doing it more subtly than others. Some of them are trying to do it in a very kind of 'one-on-one' way." Other states simply insisted "that [their libraries] must go through the planning process." The same coercive method was used with output measures; at least one state began requiring local libraries to collect the measures as a condition to the receipt of state aid. "...there were libraries who weren't ready to do this and didn't know what to do with the data when they had it. And they just didn't like the big brother approach."

PLA hoped that state agencies would use federal LSCA monies to encourage the use of the PLDP by their local libraries. One of the individuals we interviewed considered that state agencies and state library associations "have been very helpful in trying to find ways of taking this idea and translating it into something that will be effective for people in their area," since they "know [their constituents] best." PLA, being unable to solve the problem of wide dissemination alone, "passed on some of the responsibility as well as the dilemma" of diffusion to the states.

Several of the people we interviewed believed that dissemination of PLDP has progressed more quickly than was the case with the first planning manual because state agencies invested their own money in its development. "They have already invested in the product. And I think, more than anything else, that was responsible for the lightning-like dissemination and use of those products." It was also suggested that state agencies were interested in a new

PLA planning manual because it promised to give their development people a "coherent plan" with which to aid libraries with the implementation of local planning. The agencies perhaps viewed PLDP as a "built-in way to have [planning] introduced into their states." Access to the concepts behind PLDP and to the planning and role setting manual during its draft stages allowed state agencies "to prepare plans for dissemination and incorporation of the planning concepts into their ongoing library development programs. [Through the state agencies] we will reach the librarian without an MLS anyway."

Remarking on the vital role that states played in funding the development of PLDP, one of the people we interviewed said, "There were some state agencies that wanted to give money but couldn't because of various kinds of restrictions on their state monies ... but an awful lot of them did. And all they got for it was a couple of free manuals."

It was the belief of some of the individuals we interviewed that the increased interest in PLDP was due less to the improvements in the planning manual and than to the dissemination efforts at the state level. "I think it's really in the dissemination end and in the state libraries' and the systems' and the state associations' handling of [the manual] than it is in the document itself."

If there is a roadblock to the successful diffusion of PLDP, according to one person we interviewed, it would be the failure of state agencies to encourage implementation and to provide PLA with feedback regarding implementation. "I would say the major barrier is apathy at the state level. If there is a barrier, that's where it's at. If those people would jump on new ideas that are coming out and evaluate them and let us know how we can be helpful to get that information to their people in their states, that would be terrific."

Other Outcomes of the Innovation

Concurrent with the development of the manuals and the abandonment of national standards, there have been other PLA projects to which various committees and task forces have devoted considerable time. But despite the fact that PLA continued over the years to sponsor other projects, it is most closely identified with the planning manuals.

Our interviews indicated that the consequences of the development of the concept of local planning extended beyond the publication of the manuals and their dissemination. *A Planning Process* and PLDP had an effect on individuals within PLA, as well as on the association itself. The innovation has had an impact on the general attitude and activities of PLA, "more than any other division of ALA has experienced," according to one of the developers we interviewed. "I can't think of another division [of ALA] that

is as strongly affected by a project it's done as PLA. So while the organization may not have changed, certainly the whole mood, the whole way of thinking, the whole set of activities have changed." Another of those we interviewed suggested that the image of PLA has improved and that it is now seen as a national association that is nonetheless concerned with what is going on at the level of the individual library. The prolonged commitment to its innovation has invoked within the membership and the committee structure of the association "a spirit ... that's also driving so much else at PLA and it all comes together to make it certainly more visible, and I think [it has produced] a very positive feeling among public librarians about the association."

Much of the enthusiasm, excitement, and commitment that was initially generated among the developers of PLA's innovation, and that has since spread throughout the association's formal structure, was still obvious in the voices and the comments of most of the people we interviewed. When a national profession association assumes the role of a change agency, the faith that it has in its innovation and the strength of its commitment to dissemination seem to be among the attitudinal and behavioral factors that will have a bearing on the success of the diffusion effort (which must be sustained by a naturally changing association leadership over a long period of time). One of the most fascinating aspects of PLA's development and diffusion endeavor is that it was undertaken and maintained by a relatively small group of individuals. Although the number of people involved expanded and contracted periodically, the same small core group apparently kept the goal and the concept alive.

SUMMARY

In the course of our study, we discovered many more details about the activities that PLA engaged in during the research, development, packaging, and dissemination of its innovation than we have reported here. The foregoing discussion was not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to characterize the process with regard to the way it fits the Linkage model of the diffusion of innovation.

We began our study by asking whether specific linkage roles could be identified as having been assumed by the originators of the innovation. The answer is "yes." There were:

1. **conveyors**, who transferred knowledge about "what" could be done, from the research community to the key PLA committees that were struggling to solve the problem of a viable replacement for national standards

2. **consultants** from the research community, who assisted PLA in identifying planning techniques that could be adapted from other disciplines and packaged for use by public librarians

3. **trainers,** within and outside of PLA, who taught both the conceptual basis and the actual use of the innovation to state agencies, state associations, and individual librarians

4. **leaders,** within PLA's GGS committee and the NSTF, who served to influence the opinions of others in the association

5. **innovators** from the practitioner community, who initiated the ideas that eventually became the basis for the planning and evaluation tools

6. **defenders,** who made sure that attempts were made to meet the unique needs of smaller libraries as the innovation was being adapted and packaged

7. **knowledge builders**, such as members of the NSTF, who were the visionaries and goal setters that packaged the innovation into a format useful to practitioners and translated the concerns of practitioners to the researchers

8. **practitioners**, particularly individuals from BCPL, who were themselves innovators, had access to outside resource people, and who helped to forge the initial links between the research community and PLA

The second question dealt with the dissemination goals and objectives of PLA. Although not explicitly stated as goals, two outcomes were apparently hoped for by PLA: (1) that public librarians would no longer look for prescriptive national standards but would share PLA's belief that a library's effectiveness can only be measured in terms of its ability to meet the unique needs of its local community ("re-education"); and (2) that community based planning and role setting would be adopted on a broad basis among public libraries with at least one professional.

With regard to PLDP especially, another of PLA's goals was to involve state agencies in significant dissemination roles which would place the major

responsibility for reaching local libraries at a point much closer to those libraries, rather than at the national level. An objective that accompanied this goal was that of "training the trainers" and producing a manual that state agency personnel could follow in becoming their own workshop presenters.

Our third exploratory question involved the dissemination techniques used by PLA. We discovered that they could readily be classified according to five of Guba's[60] six general categories: telling, showing, helping, involving, and training. The sixth technique, intervening, was not an available option to PLA since it could not mandate compliance nor introduce sanctions. Such a technique is, however, available to state agencies. Yet our interviews indicated that PLA did not think that this method, which several states apparently adopted, was appropriate.

Many of the same dissemination methods were used with each set of manuals: informational and promotional use of the professional literature, meetings, conference programs, pre-conferences, press releases, workshops, and so forth. Chin and Benne's[61] rational-empirical approach seemed to characterize the development and dissemination of the first manual, in that much of the emphasis was on utilizing services of resource people for scientific investigation and on using applied research (e.g., field testing of the manuals). Re-education (leading practitioners away from dependence upon national standards and toward acceptance of the concept of community based planning) occurred with both APP and PLDP. However, this "normative-educative" approach did not begin in earnest until PLA had first re-educated its own leadership to the point where it stopped suggesting that the eventual outcome of widespread use of planning and evaluation would be "new" standards, empirically derived.

The change agent role which PLA set for itself is unique, partially because it cannot be accomplished in the same way as is perhaps possible with other national associations that have a degree of "policing" power over their profession (such as the American Medical Association). Nor is it similar to the change agent role that government agencies, such as county agricultural extension services, often play. PLA has neither the staff nor the resources necessary to personally reach its national constituency; and to a great extent depends upon the voluntary committee work provided by its members. Yet, the development and dissemination activities engaged in by PLA fit comfortably within the broad outlines of the general theoretical diffusion models found in the literature.

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[60] As discussed in Nancy Helburn Stein, "Causal Attributes and Effectiveness of Diffusion Techniques as Perceived by Physical Education Department Chairpersons," unpublished PhD dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, 1978, pp. 77-78.

[61] R. Chin and K.D. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems," in *The Planning of Change*, ed. G.W. Bennis, K.D. Benne, R. Chin, and K.E. Corey (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976), p. 23.

Chapter III

Surveys of State Agencies and Public Libraries

INTRODUCTION

The broad purpose of this study was to examine the process through which the planning and evaluation manuals developed by the Public Library Association have been disseminated throughout the country. The researchers' analysis of the unique perspectives and diffusion roles of those involved in the development of the planning tools was discussed in the preceding chapter. This chapter reports on two separate surveys that were conducted at the state and local levels. The first dealt with the diffusion activities of state library development agencies and the second explored the consequences of the diffusion process from the perspective of directors of small and medium-sized public libraries.

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Hawaii and Alaska were excluded from the study because the public library patterns that exist in those states are different from the rest of the country. In the case of Alaska, the state is divided into twelve boroughs, seven of which fund borough-wide library service. Twenty-three of the 32 Alaskan public libraries that are listed in the *American Library Directory* [1] appeared too small to be expected to engage in a formal planning process. Hawaii's public libraries belong to a single state-wide system. It seemed likely that a decision concerning adoption of the planning manuals by individual libraries in that state would not take place locally, but would be made at the system level. The study concentrated, therefore, on the diffusion and adoption process as it has been occurring in the 48 contiguous United States.

Mail questionnaires were used to collect data from the two respondent groups: each of the 48 state library development agencies and a national sample of 626 public libraries serving populations of under 50,000.

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[1] *American Library Directory* 41st ed., 1988-89 (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1988).

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaires were designed to obtain information about when and how members of each respondent group first became aware of the manuals, and what specific dissemination activities or adoption decisions eventually resulted from that awareness.

The information contained in *A Planning Process for Public Libraries, Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries,* and the two editions of *Output Measures for Public Libraries* was viewed by the researchers as comprising the evolution of a single innovation. We felt, however, that the diffusion of the innovation involved two distinct cycles: (1) an initial attempt to disseminate *A Planning Process,* followed two years later by a concurrent dissemination of the first edition of *Output Measures;* and (2) the current effort to disseminate the new editions of the manuals under the collective title "The Public Library Development Program" (PLDP).

The Public Library Data Service (PLDS), through which comparative input and output data on public libraries and their communities is collected and shared, is also a component of the PLDP. However, it is not part of the planning process per se and was not examined in the study.

In designing this study of PLA's diffusion efforts, the researchers took into account the fact that awareness and adoption of the output measures are not dependent upon knowledge and adoption of the planning process, nor vice versa. Therefore, limiting the study to consideration of the planning manuals only would have been an option. However, the relationship between the planning and role setting process and the use of output measures is so clearly delineated in the new editions of the manuals that the researchers were reluctant to take an approach that would ignore the emphasis that the planning process places on evaluating the library's performance.

In addition, some state library agencies have begun to require that public libraries collect and report selected output measures; studies are being conducted of the validity of certain measures[2]; and concern is being expressed within the public library community that the measures may be used inappropriately as a basis for the allocation of state aid[3]. These developments suggest that the diffusion of information regarding the evaluation component of PLA's innovation is beginning to accelerate to the point of catching up with, if not exceeding, the rate at which information about the planning process is being disseminated.

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[2] George D'Elia, "Materials Availability Fill Rates--Useful Measures of Library Performance? *Public Libraries* 24 (1985):106-10.

[3] Thomas H. Ballard, "Planning and Output Measures," *Public Libraries*, 28, no. 5 (1989):292-294.

We also considered the possibility of examining only the diffusion of the more recent PLDP in order to lessen dependence on the memories of the respondents concerning the original manuals, and to simplify questionnaire design. However, we determined that the evolutionary aspect was crucial to an understanding of the innovation and its diffusion. By limiting the time period, we would be missing a substantial amount of valuable information concerning the consequences of PLA's early diffusion efforts.

We finally decided to define the scope of the study as "the planning and evaluation process developed by the Public Library Association and disseminated through two sets of instruction manuals published between 1980 and 1987." We further decided to analyze the dissemination process in separate facets by asking a series of similar questions about each of the manuals, accepting the risk of adding to the length and seeming redundancy of the questionnaires. We felt that the drawbacks to this approach would be balanced by the advantage of allowing a comparative analysis of the four manuals with respect to diffusion activities and adoption patterns.

The majority of items on the survey instruments were in a checklist or in a multiple choice format intended to prod the memories of respondents. The section on data collection methods below includes a brief discussion of each of the questionnaires. Copies of cover letters, questionnaires, and follow-up letters can be found in Appendices B and C.

Questionnaire Evaluation

Prior to pre-testing, each of the questionnaires was evaluated by six individuals with one or a combination of the following professional affiliations: faculty or PhD students at Indiana University School of Library and Information Science with a knowledge of public librarianship and of the PLA planning manuals; directors of public libraries or regional systems excluded from the study population; and former staff members of the Indiana State Library Extension Division.

Pre-testing

The state library development agency questionnaire was pre-tested with the appropriate agency in the states of Alaska and Hawaii. Although it was not feasible to conduct a statistical analysis of the responses from the two states, the pre-testing did allow us to identify and correct additional weaknesses in clarity and in overall design of the instruments that were not noted by the evaluators.

The original intention of the researchers was to pilot-test the public library director's questionnaire with the thirty-two public libraries in Alaska. Because of the small size of the majority of these libraries, the difficulties that

the state's librarians face in traveling long distances to attend meetings and workshops, and the nature of the information about dissemination and adoption provided by the library development agency, we determined that many of the items on the pilot questionnaire would not apply to Alaskan public libraries, thus limiting the usefulness of that group for pre-testing purposes.

We decided instead to conduct a pre-test of the survey instrument with a random sample of forty public libraries, serving populations of under 50,000, and drawn from the second volume of the *American Library Directory*. A comparison between library sizes represented in the population and in the pre-test sample showed an oversampling of libraries serving between 10,000 and 49,999 people, while those serving below 10,000 people were under-represented.

The pre-test also provided an indication that the rate of return for the group of smallest libraries would be low, possibly under 25 percent. Our estimate of the probable overall return rate was roughly 59 percent. This subsequently proved to be optimistic, probably because it was based on the disproportionate number of larger libraries included in the pre-test.

Study Population

As indicated, two population groups were included in the study: 48 state library development agencies; and those public libraries in the 48 continental United States that serve fewer than 50,000 people. The total population of state agencies was surveyed. Therefore, the following discussion, which considers sampling methods, relates only to the population group represented by public libraries.

According to American Library Association statistics, there are 8,597 public libraries in the United States, excluding branches.[4] Some 89.8 percent (7,719) serve populations of under 50,000 and are generally designated as "small and medium-sized." The extent to which this majority of public libraries are aware of and have adopted PLA's planning and evaluation manuals was the central focus of the study. Although libraries serving between 50,000 and 100,000 people are sometimes included in the "medium-sized" category, the researchers felt that these libraries would have more characteristics in common with their larger counterparts. We decided, therefore, to concentrate on the smaller end of the spectrum.

Diffusion activities occurring at the state level were examined in one part of the study; therefore, consideration was given to continuing with the state as

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[4] Mary Jo Lynch, *Libraries in an Information Society: A Statistical Summary*. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1987), p. 25.

the primary unit of analysis and sampling a proportionate number of public libraries from each state. However, because some states account for fewer than one percent of the nation's small and medium-sized public libraries, we decided that such a state-by-state comparison would not serve the study's purpose. We chose instead to disregard state representation in drawing our sample, depending upon the randomization procedure to provide an adequate national distribution.

Statistics on population served, provided by the *American Library Directory* , were used to identify the study population. The total number of public libraries (excluding regional public library systems) in the 48 states, listed in the directory, and meeting the size criterion (serving populations of under 50,000), was 7,344.

It should be noted that this represents a lower total than that reported in the ALA statistical summary. In those instances when the directory entry was unclear concerning population served or the library's possible status as a regional headquarters, the library was categorized according to the considered judgment of the researchers. As a check on the accuracy of our judgment concerning the size of the libraries in the sample, we included in the questionnaire an item on population served. The responses from eight libraries (2.6 percent) indicated either that the information in the *American Library Directory* , or our judgment in assigning size categories was in error. In two of these cases, it appeared that the librarians had reported exact populations in the directory, while rounding off the population size on the questionnaire. Although this meant that two libraries with populations slightly in excess of 50,000 would be entered in the study, the degree of sampling error was within our predetermined acceptable limit of 5 percent.

Sample Size

We decided that we would need a large enough sample to compensate for the anticipated return rate and to allow us to partition the libraries by size. We determined that a random sample, stratified by size of population served, would be appropriate to the study's objectives and, if the sample were proportionate, it would be representative of size-related variations in the population. As long as the sample is adequate for the statistical techniques being used, achieving a representative sample is generally considered more important than the size of the sample in reducing sampling bias in survey research.

Because many of the variables we intended to examine could be described in terms of totals and percentages, we chose a method of estimating the required sample size based on the proportion of the population that is assumed to possess a certain characteristic. The formula we used is from

McCall's *Sampling and Statistics Handbook for Research*.[5] It contains a correction factor for the population size in order to avoid overestimating the size of the sample required:

$$n = \hat{\pi}(1-\hat{\pi}) / [(\varepsilon^2/Z^2) + \hat{\pi}(1-\hat{\pi}) / N]$$

where:

n	is the estimated number of cases necessary in the sample for the desired precision and confidence
$\hat{\pi}$	is the preliminary estimate of the proportion in the population
Z	is the two-tailed value of the standardized normal deviate associated with the desired level of confidence
ε	is the acceptable error
N	is the number of entities in the population

A major variable of interest was the adoption of the planning manuals. Therefore, $\hat{\pi}$ became the proportion of the population estimated to have used the planning process. We had no prior information as to what the value of π might be; however, the product of $\hat{\pi}(1 - \hat{\pi})$ assumes a maximum value when $\hat{\pi} = 0.50$. When a larger or smaller value is used, the sample size is reduced accordingly. Therefore, a safe assumption of the value of $\hat{\pi}$ is 0.50.

We determined an acceptable error of .05 in the sample estimate and set a 95 percent confidence level. Substituting these values in the formula, we arrived at a required sample size of 365.

Our preliminary estimate of a likely response rate was between 58 and 59 percent. In order to compensate for the expected percentage of nonresponses, we used the following formula[6] for adjusting sample size:

$$n_a = n/P_r$$

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[5] Chester H. McCall, Jr. , *Sampling and Statistics Handbook for Research* (Ames, IA: The Iowa State University Press, 1982), p. 194.

[6] McCall, p. 205.

where:

n_a	is the sample size adjusted for the expected rate of response
n	is the preliminary estimate of sample size
P_r	is the expected rate of response expressed as a proportion

Substituting the value .583 for P_r in the formula, our adjusted sample size became 626. Although increasing the preliminary sample size does not eliminate nonresponse bias (possible differences between respondent and nonrespondent groups), it does allow the researchers to compensate numerically for the percentage of nonresponses by bringing the total response closer to 100 percent of the unadjusted sample size.

Sample Selection

The libraries listed under each state in the *American Library Directory*, that met the selection criteria, were numbered consecutively. In addition, each was assigned a number from one to four indicating its size category (under 5,000 population; 5,000-9,999; 10,000-24,999; 25,000-49,999). Using a combination of randomly selected page numbers and library identification numbers, we drew four independent random samples from the *American Library Directory*, one sample from each of the size categories. The proportion of libraries sampled from each category matched the proportion existing in the criterion population. Consideration was given to using a disproportionate stratified sample in order to include more libraries serving between 25,000 and 49,999 people. We decided that this approach would not be necessary because of the size of the total sample, and because of the higher response rate we were anticipating from the larger (as compared to the smaller) libraries in the sample.

Data Collection Methods

1. State Library Development Agencies

On March 10, 1989, a 21 page questionnaire was sent to the director of each state library development agency, as listed in *The Bowker Annual* [7] with the request that it be completed by the individual or consultant most closely involved with public library development in the state. A follow-up post card was sent to 19 agencies that did not respond by April 15. Appendix B contains a copy of the cover letter, follow-up post card, and questionnaire. Thirty-six usable questionnaires were returned. This 75 percent response rate was lower than we had hoped for; however, it was considered adequate for the purposes of the study.

Telephone interviews and PLA internal documents had indicated that the leadership within PLA recognized the importance of the state agencies in the diffusion process and were depending upon their active collaboration. The focus of the survey was the variation among state library development agencies with regard to their commitment to the diffusion of long range planning skills among public librarians, as well as their specific dissemination activities in connection with each of the four manuals. When and how each agency first became aware of the manuals and their initial reactions to them were also of interest.

A review of the diffusion literature had led to the identification of a number of factors that the researchers believed would serve as indicators of the role of state agencies in the diffusion process. The survey instrument was designed to measure these and other factors, including:

1. The extent to which the agency interacts with the American Library Association, the Public Library Association, and the state library association.

2. The number and types of methods used to promote long range planning in general, and to promote adoption of output measures, *A Planning Process,* and *Planning and Role Setting* specifically.

3. The conscious decision or commitment made by the agency concerning the degree of its involvement in the diffusion process.

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[7] *Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information.* 33rd ed., 1988. (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1988, pp. 659-63.

In addition, there were several open-ended questions that related to the respondent's perceptions of barriers or facilitators to adoption of long range planning by public libraries in the state.

2. Small and Medium-Sized Public Libraries

The director of each public library in the stratified random sample was sent a cover letter and a nine page questionnaire on June 16, 1989. Follow-up letters and duplicate questionnaires were mailed to 171 directors from public libraries serving between 5,000 and 49,999 people who had not responded by August 5. Appendix C contains a copy of the cover letter, survey instrument, and follow-up letter.

The questionnaire was designed to collect descriptive data primarily, concerning the numbers and percentages of public libraries within each size category that (1) were aware of each of the manuals, (2) had access to certain sources of information (the professional literature, meetings, workshops, and the like) about each of the manuals; and (3) had made an adoption, implementation, rejection or other decision concerning each of the manuals. In addition, a series of questions were asked about the background of the director; for example, educational level, professional involvement, and number of journals read on a regular basis.

Population and Sample Characteristics

The population consisted of 7,344 public libraries which met the criteria discussed above. Nearly 50 percent (3,663) were identified as serving fewer than 5,000 people. It was determined that 17 percent (1,266) serve between 5,000 and 9,999; 21 percent (1,569) serve populations of 10,000 to 24,999; and 12 percent (846) serve between 25,000 and 49,999 people. The researchers adopted these four commonly used size groupings for purposes of stratification and comparative analysis.

Although we did not attempt to achieve proportionate state representation, we were interested in the extent to which the sample matched the population with respect to the proportion of libraries located within broad geographic areas. If our sampling method resulted in a geographically representative sample, locational differences might be explored. Also, it would strengthen our assumption that the sample was indeed representative with regard to other characteristics, in addition to size, existing in the population.

Table 2 provides a geographic and size breakdown of the libraries in the sample as compared with those in the population. In each case, the proportions are within several percentage points of each other, indicating that the sample did turn out to be fairly representative in this regard.

TABLE 2. COMPARISON OF THE SAMPLE AND THE POPULATION WITH RESPECT TO SIZE CATEGORIES REPRESENTED WITHIN EACH GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Geographic Area	Sample		Population	
Great Plains	No.	(%)	No.	(%)
under 5,000	59	(9.4)	670	(9.1)
5,000 - 9,999	15	(2.4)	162	(2.2)
10,000 - 24,999	13	(2.1)	150	(2.0)
25,000 - 50,000	5	(0.8)	85	(1.2)
Subtotal	92	(14.7)	1067	(14.5)
Mid-Atlantic				
under 5,000	37	(5.9)	520	(7.1)
5,000 - 9,999	22	(3.5)	304	(4.1)
10,000 - 24,999	30	(4.8)	382	(5.2)
25,000 - 50,000	17	(2.7)	171	(2.3)
Subtotal	106	(16.9)	1377	(18.7)
Midwest				
under 5,000	120	(19.2)	1,333	(18.2)
5,000 - 9,999	31	(5.0)	349	(4.8)
10,000 - 24,999	46	(7.3)	418	(5.7)
25,000 - 50,000	12	(1.9)	215	(2.9)
Subtotal	209	(33.4)	2315	(31.6)
Mts. & Far West				
under 5,000	21	(3.4)	315	(4.3)
5,000 - 9,999	12	(1.9)	122	(1.7)
10,000 - 24,999	15	(2.4)	144	(2.0)
25,000 - 50,000	10	(1.6)	89	(1.2)
Subtotal	58	(9.3)	670	(9.2)
New England				
under 5,000	56	(8.9)	607	(8.3)
5,000 - 9,999	15	(2.4)	194	(2.6)
10,000 - 24,999	19	(3.0)	206	(2.8)
25,000 - 50,000	7	(1.1)	78	(1.1)
Subtotal	97	(15.4)	1085	(14.8)
The South				
under 5,000	19	(3.0)	218	(3.0)
5,000 - 9,999	13	(2.1)	135	(1.8)
10,000 - 24,999	12	(1.9)	269	(3.7)
25,000 - 50,000	20	(3.2)	208	(2.8)
Subtotal	64	(10.2)	820	(11.3)
TOTAL	626	(99.9)*	7344	(100.1)*

* Due to rounding error, percentages do not total 100.

The largest percentage of public libraries serving under 50,000 people (31.6 percent) are located in the Midwest. It is probably a safe assumption that most of these are to be found in small rural or suburban communities.

Methods of Data Processing and Analysis

The computer package, *SPSS*^{x} was used for statistical analysis, which was conducted through Indiana University Computer Services. Prior to the study, a significance level of .05 was established for all statistical procedures. This section describes the techniques used to analyze the study data. The findings section describes the data collected in terms of the characteristics of the state agencies and the sample libraries and describes the results of the various data analyses.

Variables were selected which would allow comparison with the Havelock linkage model[8], the Chin and Benne strategy categories[9], and the Guba dissemination techniques[10], which were discussed in Chapter 1. Both survey instruments were designed to measure dichotomous variables primarily; that is, they measured the presence or absence of certain factors (which we had defined as specific diffusion strategies or techniques, as indicators of adoption stages, information access, and so forth).

In several instances, a group of questionnaire items was combined in order to assign an overall "score" on a particular variable. For example, a simple count was taken of all of the sources of information about each of the planning manuals to which a library reportedly had access. This provided an "access to information" score for the first manual, which could be compared to a corresponding score for the second manual.

Reliability Estimates

The discriminating power of each item in a scale composed of additive items contributes to the overall reliability and validity of the scale. Item analysis, a procedure which separately evaluates each item as to whether it discriminates in the same way as the overall scale is intended to discriminate, was used as a statistical test of reliability. The *SPSS*^{x} subprogram RELIABILITY was used to compute Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for

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[8] R. G. Havelock, *Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, 1969.

[9] R. Chin and K.D. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems," in *The Planning of Change*, ed, G.W. Bennis, K.D. Benne, R. Chin, and K. E. Corey (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976).

[10] As discussed in Nancy Helburn Stein, "Causal Attributions and Effectiveness of Diffusion Techniques as Perceived by Physical Education Department Chairpersons," unpublished PhD dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 1978, pp. 77-78.

each scale. Reliability coefficients are a widely used means of demonstrating the internal consistency and accuracy of a measurement.[11]

As indicated by the nature of the research questions that guided the study, our initial interest focused on determining whether the existing situation was similar to that theorized in most diffusion models. We were also interested in determining the cumulative proportion of libraries in the population that had adopted the planning manuals and in exploring whether the resulting diffusion curve would approximate that found in adoption studies conducted in other organizational settings. To that extent, the work was designed to be largely exploratory and descriptive. Percentages, means, and correlations were used to describe the data with reference to the research questions.

The study was also necessarily concerned with interrelationships among diffusion roles, dissemination techniques and strategies carried out at the state level, and such library variables as awareness and adoption of the manuals. In addition, we looked for interrelationships between the networking activities engaged in by the state agencies, agency perceptions of the usefulness of the manuals, and their subsequent decisions about assuming a dissemination role.

With respect to the libraries in the study, we hypothesized about the influence on adoption of such factors as size of population served, the director's involvement in professional associations, his or her educational level, and the extent to which the director reads the professional literature.

Although the study was largely descriptive, two major research hypotheses were tested:

H_1 : As state agencies begin to assume a more significant role in dissemination, public libraries will tend to implement more facets of the innovation (that is, they will score higher on the implementation scale)

H_2: Adoption of the planning manuals is related to such variables as: size of library, access to information about the manuals, and the director's involvement in the profession.

T-tests, one-way analysis of variance, and multiple regression analysis were the primary statistical techniques used for data analysis and for testing the hypotheses.

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[11] Fred N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, (New York: Holt, 1964) p. 429.

FINDINGS

In this section, the results of the survey of state library development agencies are presented first, followed by the findings from the survey of public librarians. The section concludes with the results that were obtained from the tests of the study's two major hypotheses and from an analysis of the combined data from the two surveys.

State Library Development Agency Survey

There were 36 usable responses from state library development agencies (75 percent). Table 3 provides information concerning the return rate from each broad geographic area. The lowest percentage of returns came from the mid-Atlantic area (40 percent); the highest from the great plains states (100 percent). The researchers concluded that the returned questionnaires provided an adequate sample with regard to geographic distribution.

State Library Agency Characteristics

The diffusion literature suggested that several characteristics of state agencies would have an influence on the rate of adoption of library innovations. The study examined the following characteristics:

1. The extent to which the agency interacts or networks with national and state library associations.
2. The dissemination techniques or methods used by the state agency.
3. The goals or objectives of the agency with regard to the promotion of long range planning among public libraries.
4. The agency's perceptions of the innovation.

The presence of interaction between state library development agencies and professional associations was assumed to be an indicator of the linkage which Havelock's model suggests is extremely important to the diffusion process. Questionnaire item 3 was in a checklist format and described five possible levels of interaction with each association (ALA, PLA, and the state library association). These were expressed as follows:

1. The agency's staff are personal members;
2. Agency staff are sent to annual conferences;
3. The agency provides released time/travel expenses to encourage staff to become active in association committee work;
4. The agency is an institutional member of the association;
5. A staff member is designated as the agency's liaison with the association.

Table 3. Percentage of Returns by Geographic Area

Geographic Area	No. of States	No. of Returns	(%)
Great Plains	6	6	(100)
Mts. & Far West	11	10	(91)
New England	6	5	(83)
South	12	8	(67)
Mid-West	8	5	(62)
Mid-Atlantic	5	2	(40)
	48	36	

Table 4. Interactions of State Agencies with Library Associations (n = 36)

	ALA No. (%)	PLA No. (%)	State Association No. (%)
Personal members	36 (100.0)	32 (88.9)	36 (100.0)
Conferences attended	34 (94.4)	24 (66.7)	36 (100.0)
Expenses paid	32 (88.9)	22 (61.1)	35 (097.2)
Institutional members	30 (83.3)	20 (55.6)	24 (66.7)
Liaison	5 (13.9)	3 (8.3)	16 (44.4)

Table 4 presents the frequency of interactions by state agencies with the three associations. Each type of interaction was assumed to represent a progressively higher level of "networking." As expected, interactions by state agencies with state associations occurred most frequently. Both organizations have a vested interest in library development within the state and presumably work together to that end. It was also expected that interactions with PLA would be found to occur with the least frequency. Although the data confirmed this expectation, it is interesting that 61 percent of the agencies encourage staff to become actively involved in PLA by paying expenses or allowing released time to attend committee or section meetings.

Although some 67 percent of respondents indicated that agency staff regularly attend PLA conferences and 94 percent attend ALA conferences, only 58 percent (21 agencies) reported knowing about the planning process prior to publication of the manual in 1980 (questionnaire item 12). It should be noted, however, that answers to this question depended upon the respondent knowing when the agency first became aware (10 respondents or almost 28 percent indicated that they did not know). Also, a reliable answer depended upon the respondent being able to remember the approximate time period (prior to 1975, 1976-1980, after 1980). Although our original intention was to seek relationships between time of first awareness and level of interaction with PLA and ALA, the collected data were not appropriate to this type of analysis: "awareness" occurred in the past, while "interaction" involved the current situation.

Questionnaire item 13 asked respondents **how** their agency first became aware of *A Planning Process for Public Libraries* . Five possibilities were listed (along with an "other" category, and a "don't know" option). Each means of awareness was assumed to correspond to a diffusion strategy used by PLA. Respondents were asked if they found out:

1. through articles in **the library literature**
2. through **informal, word-of-mouth channels**
3. through direct **communication from ALA/PLA**
4. through **PLA-sponsored pre-conferences or workshops**
5. through **ALA conferences or meetings**

Apparently, this question depended too much upon the memories of the respondents. Only 15 agencies provided useful information; nine did not respond to the question; six responded that they did not know; and three checked the "other" category, but did not specify what the other means of first awareness was. Of the 15 respondents who answered the question by selecting one of the options, seven (46.7 percent) indicated that they first became aware through articles in the journal literature; only two (13 percent)

became aware through direct communication with PLA or ALA; one learned about the process through PLA pre-conferences or workshops; one through informal word-of-mouth channels; and four (26.6 percent) through ALA conferences or meetings. The low response to this question and the weakness of the measure limit the extent to which we can generalize about "first awareness." However, considering the extent to which PLA utilized the journal literature to announce its "new direction" with regard to standards and to keep the profession informed of planning process developments, perhaps the 47 percent who indicated that their agencies first learned of the planning process through the literature provides a conservative estimate of the actual percentage existing in the population.

Item 14 asked whether the state agency was involved in the development or evaluation of the planning process manual. Three respondents did not know; 24 (66.7 percent) were not involved; and 9 (25 percent) had some form of involvement. Item 15 asked about involvement with the first output measures manual. Only 6 (16.7 percent) responded that they were involved.

This reportedly low level of input by state agencies into the development of the first set of manuals is consistent with the information gathered for the other component of the study as reported in Chapter 2. PLA was looking toward the research community for developmental help and guidance; it perceived that involvement of state agencies would take place after the development and packaging phases; that is, during the dissemination phase.

Questionnaire item 6 asked for the respondent's opinion of the priority the agency places on encouraging public librarians in the state to learn and use formal planning techniques. Options were: no opinion, not a priority, a low priority, a somewhat high priority, a high priority, and a top priority. Table 5 shows how the respondents characterized the emphasis that their agencies place on the promotion of long-range planning.

Although 77 percent (27) of the respondents were of the opinion that their agencies assigned a "somewhat high" or a "high" priority to the promotion of planning techniques, this function appears as a written goal or objective in only 48.5 percent (16) of the long range plans developed by the state agencies themselves (questionnaire item 7, n=33). In the long-range plans of 12 state agencies (36 percent), promotion of planning techniques is "referred to," although it is not a stated goal or objective. Responses to these two questionnaire items suggest that the majority of state agencies are in agreement with PLA that local planning is an important element in public library development. However, the correlation between these two factors (priority and written goal) was only moderate (Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient $r_S = .525$, $p = .001$).

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of the Priority Placed on Promoting Long-Range Planning Techniques (n = 35)

	No. of Agencies	(%)
Not a priority	2	(5.7)
A low priority	3	(8.6)
Somewhat high priority	14	(40.0)
A high priority	13	(37.1)
The top priority	3	(8.6)
	35	(100.0)

There was also a moderate correlation between the priority the state agency currently places on promotion of long-range planning and the agency's decision concerning the role it should take in disseminating the latest edition of the planning and role setting manual ($r_S = .616$, $p = .000$). Respondents were asked to select the option which best described the dissemination decision made by their agency with regard to each of the planning manuals (questionnaire items 20 and 36). Table 6 compares the agencies' decisions with respect to the first and second planning manuals (APP and PRSM).

Approximately the same percentage decided to take a limited dissemination role in both instances. Although only 26 percent of the state agencies decided to take a significant role in disseminating the first planning manual, nearly half decided on a significant role with respect to the second manual. There was a weak correlation ($r_S = .323$, $p = .03$) between the dissemination decisions made with regard to the first and second manuals.

This suggests that the decisions were generally made independently of each other; that is, the extent to which an agency decided to take a role in disseminating the second manual was only slightly influenced by its earlier decision concerning the first manual.

Table 6. Comparison of the Dissemination Roles Assumed by State Agencies with Respect to APP and PRSM (n=35)

	APP		PRSM	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
No decision	9	(25.7)	2	(5.7)
Not to take a role	3	(8.6)	1	(2.9)
Take a limited role	14	(40.0)	15	(42.9)
Take a significant role	9	(25.7)	17	(48.6)

The near doubling of the percentage of state agencies which are now taking a significant dissemination role may be at least partially due to perceived improvements in the second manual. It may also be that the *concept* of community-based planning had become more feasible to state agencies by 1987 because of the changes PLA made with respect to involving state agencies in the development phase of the second planning manual. In any event, the increase in the number of state agencies that decided to take a significant role in disseminating the manuals represents the beginning of a shift in diffusion activity to what might be termed a "secondary" level. A general acceptance of a major dissemination role by state agencies, whose help PLA believes it must have in order to reach local libraries, should relieve the association of much of the diffusion responsibility in the future, allowing it instead to concentrate on the development of other innovations.

The survey did provide some clues concerning the differences between the two manuals as perceived by state agency personnel. Questions 18 and 19 dealt with *APP* and questions 34 and 35 were in reference to *PRSM*. In the first pair of corresponding questions (18 and 34), respondents were given six criteria for evaluating self-help manuals (clear explanations, logical organization, "do-able" by the potential audience, adequate examples in the text, the process can be tailored to user needs). They were asked to apply each of the criteria to each planning manual through the use of a five-point scale (no opinion, poor, fair, good, very good). Responses on scale items were summed to arrive at a "process" score for each manual.

In the second pair of questions, respondents were given a list of topics covered by each manual and asked to use the same five-point scale to evaluate coverage of each topic. Scale items were then summed to obtain a "content" score for each manual.

Spearman rank-order correlation coefficients were used to make an initial assessment of the extent to which scores for the first manual were related to scores that respondents gave to the second manual. Table 7 displays the correlation coefficients obtained among the four scales.

There was no significant correlation between the scores on the two manuals with regard to the way respondents evaluated "process" criteria; nor was there a significant correlation between the "process" scores on one manual and "content" scores on the other. However, we obtained a weak correlation between the "content" scores of APP and those of PRSM (r_S = .4135). These data suggest that the second edition of the planning manual was evaluated on its own merits by the respondents, with perceptions of the earlier manual having only a slight influence.

Stronger correlation coefficients were obtained between "content" scores and "process" scores for each manual (.7816 and .7329). That is, when the two sets of evaluation criteria were applied to the same manual, there was a strong direct relationship. This was to be expected if both scales were indeed measuring the "value" of each manual as perceived by the respondents.

Table 7. Correlations Between Content and Process scores for *APP* and *PRSM* (n=36)

	Content (APP)	Content (PRSM)	Process (APP)
Content (PRSM)	.4135 (p=.006)		
Process (APP)	.7816 (p=.000)	.2029 (not sig.)	
Process (PRSM)	.0909 (not sig.)	.7329 (p=.000)	.0097 (not sig.)

As noted in the methodology section, item analysis was chosen as the statistical method used to estimate internal consistency of the various scales developed for the study, including those discussed here. Item analysis provides a reliability coefficient (an index of the scale's reliability) based on the single administration of a single set of measurements. That being the case, the reliability coefficient obtained through item analysis only indicates the reliability of each scale when applied to the specific state agencies and public libraries in this study. No general statement concerning the reliability of the scales themselves can be made.

The *SPSS*^{X} subprogram RELIABILITY was used to compute Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for each of the scales used to measure perceptions of the two manuals. The estimates are based on inter-item correlations and on item-total correlations. The alpha coefficients for these and other scales developed for the study appear in Table 8. The four coefficients for the content and process scales were in the .88 through .97 range, indicating high levels of internal consistency were achieved in the administration of each of the scales.

Each state library agency receives an allotment of federal funding in the form of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) monies which it generally distributes on a competitive basis as annual grants to local and regional library systems. Most states also use some of their LSCA funding for the state library's own programs. Our interviews had indicated that PLA was hopeful that states would use LSCA funds for disseminating the planning process. We felt that another indicator of the state agency's commitment to diffusing PLA's planning techniques might be whether or not the state used any of its LSCA money to promote long-range planning.

Of the 35 agencies that responded to the questionnaire item that asked about the use of LSCA funds (item 8), 40 percent (14) indicated that they had never used any LSCA money for this purpose, while 57 percent (20) indicated that they had. (One agency responded that it did not know.) Since there was a considerably smaller percentage of "yes" responses on this variable than the 96 percent who indicated that they were undertaking either a limited or a significant role in the dissemination process, it would seem that this variable is not an especially useful predictor of the state's commitment to dissemination.

Table 8. Alpha Reliability Coefficients (n=36)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Content (*APP*)	8	.9465
Content (*PRSM*)	9	.9679
Process (*APP*)	5	.8781
Process (*PRSM*)	5	.9395
Methods (APP)	9	.7588
Methods (PRSM)	9	.5774
Journals Read	7	.2760
Info. Access (APP)	6	.8049
Info. Access (PRSM)	6	.8149
Implement. (APP)	4	.8156
Implement. (PRSM)	5	.8235

State Agency Dissemination Methods

Questionnaire items 23, 29, 39, and 49 asked about dissemination techniques with regard to each of the four manuals. Respondents were provided with the following list of methods from which they were to select as many as applied:

1. provision of **information** through **mailings**
2. provision of **information** through state library **journals/newsletters**

3. provision of **information at state or regional conferences/meetings**
4. provision of **information** about **actual use** or experience with the manual
5. provision of **introductory workshops** aimed at **convincing** participants that they should use the manual
6. provision of **workshops by agency staff** on how to use the manual
7. provision of **workshops by outside presenters** on how to use the manual
8. **consultation** visits by agency staff to individual public libraries
9. **mandating** that each public library submit a long range plan based on the use of the manual

The ninth question differed on the two questionnaire items dealing with the output measures manuals. It asked about "inclusion of output measures among the statistics required **in the library's annual report to the state.**" Table 9 reports on the number and percentage of state agencies that used each method with respect to each of the four manuals. Not surprisingly, consultant visits to individual libraries occurred with the most frequency with regard to each of the manuals.

An important function of state library development agencies is the consultant services they provide, especially to smaller libraries that lack specialists on their staffs. It was mainly because of this function that PLA identified state agencies as an appropriate source of help to smaller libraries attempting to implement the planning and role setting process. The frequent use of state journals and state conferences as well as workshops was also to be expected, as these are common information dissemination techniques. Although our interviews with developers of the planning process indicated that, despite attempts to "train the trainers," there was a continuing demand for presentations by people from PLA, this method was not used by many of the state agencies. Presumably, such PLA workshops were conducted more often for the members of state and regional library systems and associations than for the constituents of state agencies.

Responses to the questions about dissemination techniques were used to construct two additional composite scales. Through a simple count of the number of techniques used, each agency was assigned a "dissemination methods" score for APP and for PRSM. Once again, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were computed in order to estimate the internal consistency of the two scales (Table 8). The alpha coefficient of the dissemination methods scale for the first planning manual was .7002, indicating a moderate level of reliability. By removing the item relating to workshops by outside presenters, the reliability estimate is increased to .7588, which is still only in the moderate range.

Table 9. Techniques used by State Agencies for Dissemination of the Planning and Output Measures Manuals

Technique	APP (n=22)	PRSM (n=31)	OMPL-1 (n=32)	OMPL-2 (n=34)
mailings	11 (50.0%)	11 (35.5%)	11 (33.3%)	12(35.3%)
journals	17 (77.3%)	20 (64.5%)	16 (50.0%)	17 (50.0%)
conferences	16 (72.7%)	22 (71.0%)	13 (40.6%)	12 (35.3%)
actual use	11 (50.0%)	8 (25.8%)	9 (28.1%)	8 (23.5%)
introductory Workshops	10 (45.5%)	16 (51.6%)	8 (25.0%)	8 (23.5%)
How-to Workshops	9 (40.9%)	13 (41.9%)	9 (28.1%)	7 (20.6%)
Outside Presenters	4 (18.2%)	8 (25.8%)	2 (6.3%)	5 (14.7%)
Consulting	18 (81.8%)	28 (90.3%)	21 (65.6%)	26 (76.5%)
Mandating	1 (4.5%)	2 (6.5%)	-------	------
Output meas.	-------	-------	16 (50.0%)	17 (50.0%)

The scale measuring dissemination methods for PRSM achieved a less satisfactory reliability coefficient of .5774. (As indicated earlier, item analysis is concerned with the discriminating power of the items in the scale. If respondents consistently provide the same answers to certain items on the scale, neither the items, nor the total scale will have sufficient discriminating power. This was apparently the case with our dissemination techniques.) Because neither scale achieved as high a level of internal consistency as we had hoped for, a planned statistical analysis of possible relationships between dissemination methods and several adoption variables from the library director's survey was not conducted.

Public Library Director's Survey

One of the study's assumptions was that very small libraries would indicate that most of the items on the questionnaire dealing with awareness and use of the planning manuals were not applicable to them (that is, they would be unaware of the manuals). This did indeed turn out to be the case with those who responded by the deadline.

The majority of stated refusals to participate in the study and most of the nonusable questionnaires came from this group (serving under 5,000 people). The nearly unanimous reason given for returning a blank questionnaire was "We never heard of these manuals." Because we had built this response into the numerous "not applicable" categories on the questionnaire, this same message (that the library had never heard of the manuals) was contained in a large number of the usable questionnaires from this size group. It might be assumed that the major difference between respondents and nonrespondents from the smallest libraries is that the respondents took the word of the researchers that it was important to the study to discover the fact that a respondent was unaware of the manuals.

Nonrespondents among the group of libraries serving fewer than 5,000 people were not sent follow-up letters because it was a fairly safe assumption that most of the failure to return the questionnaires was due to nonawareness of the manuals and the perception that this negated their participation. In addition, nearly half of the sample came from that stratum of the population and, although the stratum's return rate was small, the number of usable returned questionnaires (88) was considered adequate for the study's purpose and for conducting statistical tests.

The final return rate for the questionnaire was 51.8 percent (324 responses). Among these, 298 (47.6 percent), were usable. The remaining 26 returned questionnaires had to be excluded from the analysis either because respondents declined to participate, left most of the questionnaire unanswered, or returned only the last two pages of the questionnaire (dealing with background information on the director and the library). This was an interesting phenomenon: two of the three individuals who kept the main part of the questionnaire indicated that they did so because they were interested in the information it provided about the planning manuals, which they had never heard of before. Several persons noted on their incomplete questionnaires that they would appreciate receiving more information about the manuals *from the researchers*. Others, instead of completing the questionnaire, wrote lengthy comments about their libraries and how they were attempting to meet user needs with scarce resources, and without the time to engage in any formal planning techniques.

The second most frequently expressed reason for refusing to participate in the survey was lack of time and "more important things tc do" relative to operating the library. Three returned questionnaires were not included because they arrived after data analysis had been completed. However, a comment on one of these questionnaires reflects a perception that may not be uncommon among directors of smaller libraries. The respondent expressed a feeling of isolation from the profession at large, which was seen as refusing to recognize the unique contributions and unique needs of smaller institutions:

> I have not seen ...the planning manuals in which you are interested. I am not unwilling to see them. My experience with other well-intentioned efforts, however, leads me to expect that they will be, not merely worthless, but actually detrimental to the practical small library. The key point, universally missed by people with the MLS degree, is that small libraries are NOT defective large libraries: they have, and to survive must have, a different mission and a distinctive administrative style. The profession has never conceded the reality of these differences.... if anyone wants to know how to run a small library, send them here.

Table 10 provides a comparison, by size category, between the usable returns and the sample. Three percentages are given: the percentage of the sample represented by each size category; the percentage of all usable returns accounted for by each size category; and the percentage of usable questionnaires returned from within each size category. Libraries serving between 5,000 and 9,999 people, for example, represented 17.3 percent of the sample, and 19.1 percent of all usable returns. Of the 108 libraries sampled from this category, 57 usable questionnaires (52.8 percent) were returned. The two groups of larger libraries had within group return rates of 71.1 percent and 80.3 percent respectively, Because there were only 71 libraries in the sample that serve between 25,000 and 49,999 people (11.3 percent), the 57 returned questionnaires from this group only represents 19.1 percent of the total usable returns.

Of the 312 questionnaires sent to the libraries serving under 5,000 people, 88 (28.2 percent) were usable. This group is presumably the most homogeneous with respect to limited awareness, and limited potential for adoption, of the planning manuals. Therefore the 88 responses should be sufficient for the purpose of generalizing about this group in relation to the diffusion process. As was expected, the group's low response rate was in contrast to the response rates found in the other three groups. If this group were excluded, for example, the overall response rate would rise to 66.9 percent.

There were a sufficient number of responses in each size category for statistical analysis. In addition, the 298 total responses represent 81.6 percent of the unadjusted sample size (365) that the researchers calculated would be required to achieve the desired accuracy (with regard to estimates of population parameters) at the corresponding confidence level. The overall response rate was therefore considered sufficient to allow the researchers to generalize the sample findings to the criterion population.

Table 10. Comparison by Library Size Categories: Sample And Usable Returns

	Sample		Usable Returns		
	No.	(%)	No.	% of all Returns	Within Group %
under 5000	312	(49.8)	88	29.5	28.2
5,000-9,999	108	(17.3)	57	19.1	52.8
10,000-24,999	135	(21.6)	96	32.2	71.1
25,000-49,999	71	(11.3)	57	19.1	80.3
Totals	626	(100.0)	298	99.9*	

* due to rounding error, percentage does not total 100

The focus of this study was on libraries serving populations of fewer than 50,000, which we characterized as small and medium-sized. In previous diffusion studies, size has consistently been shown to have an influence on the adoption of organizational innovations. Economic access to innovations is more limited in the case of smaller organizations, which typically have insufficient human and financial resources to devote to the implementation of the innovation. Limited economic access also implies that a barrier exists between the organization and *information* about the innovation. Our survey attempted to look at smaller public libraries with respect to both variables: *access to information* about PLA's innovation and any subsequent decision concerning the innovation.

The libraries in the study ranged in size of population served from 336 to 52,000[12] (questionnaire item 27). The mean population size was 13,886; the standard deviation was 12,346; and the median was 10,000. Nine libraries served fewer than 1,000 people.

The educational levels of the library directors (questionnaire item 29) are shown in Table 11. Some 43 percent of the directors had not attained an MLS, while 40 percent possessed the professional degree. The remaining 17 percent had either a masters degree in another field, education beyond the MLS degree, or an unspecified level of education. It will be recalled that PLA intended its planning and role setting manual for use in the library with "at least one professional." Usually, the library director would be the single professional on the staff. Generalizing the study's findings to the population of small and medium-sized libraries, we can estimate that 47 percent (plus or minus a five percent margin of error) are headed by a professional librarian. By extension, PLA's target audience would consist of some 47 percent of this same population It would seem that in order for PLA to have met its diffusion objectives with regard to libraries with at least one professional, its innovation will need to be adopted by 47 percent of the libraries that serve under 50,000 people.

Attendance at conferences and membership on association committees were assumed to be indicators of the director's professional involvement. These variables were included as indicators of the extent to which the director is a "cosmopolite"; that is, a person who has more than the average number of outside contacts. Other studies have found a relationship between cosmopolites and innovation. Questionnaire item 30 dealt with the number of conferences attended; while item 31 asked about service on association committees:

> 30. How many library conferences, workshops, association meetings, etc. have you attended in the past 12 months? (estimate if necessary)
>
> 31. How many library association committees have you served on in the past three years? (estimate if necessary)

Responses to item 30 ranged from 0 to 98, with a mean of 7.9 and a standard deviation of 9.1 (n=295). The several extreme values (above 30) made further use of the mean questionable. The median number of conferences attended was 6, which is probably the more useful statistic with

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[12]Two libraries which we had identified through the *American Library Directory* as serving populations of just under 50,000 reported on the questionnaire that they served 50,000 and 52,000 people respectively. Rather than eliminate them from the study because they exceeded the size limitation, we decided to include them in the data as a known part of our 5% margin of sampling error.

regard to distinguishing "cosmopolite" behavior. Responses to item 31 were also quite dispersed, with a mean of 1.4 and a standard deviation of 2.4 (n=282). The median number of committees served on was 0. The questions did not differentiate between regional, state, or national association activities. It is a reasonable assumption that high responses regarding conferences and workshops attended reflect state and regional level activities more than those on a national level. Statistical analyses using these two variables are discussed below.

Table 11. Frequency Distribution of Level of Education of Library Directors (n = 296)

Education	Number	%
high school	21	07.1
some college	55	08.6
batchelors degree	51	17.2
MLS	119	40.2
other masters degree	11	03.7
MLS plus other	20	06.8
other	19	06.4

Access to Information

Presumably, the journal literature provides an effective means of communication within a discipline. Certainly PLA attempted to make the maximum use of library journals. This is one type of information access, however, which carries a price tag that many smaller libraries cannot afford to pay. The notion of economic access to information is perhaps relevant here; however, the study did not attempt to operationalize "economic access."

In order to examine the director's access to the professional literature, respondents were given a list of seven professional journals and asked to indicate which of these they read on a regular basis (questionnaire item 32). The journals selected were those aimed at public libraries and those in which information regarding PLA's innovation has appeared (*Library Journal*,

Public Libraries, American Libraries, Wilson Library Bulletin, Public Library Quarterly, School Library Journal, and the state association's journal).

Each journal was measured as a dichotomous (yes/no) variable. The sum of the number of journals read was intended to provide an "access to the literature" score. Because the majority of respondents reported reading only one or two of the journals, the scale lacked the power to discriminate well among scores. Consequently, the reliability estimate (Table 8) for this scale was low (Cronbach's alpha coefficient = .2760), making the use of the scores in subsequent analysis questionable.

Table 12 displays the frequency distribution of journals read by directors in each library size category. Directors of the majority of the smallest public libraries read the *Library Journal* (51.9 percent) and their state association journal (66.2 percent). The majority of those in libraries that serve between 25,000 and 49,999 also have access to *Public Libraries* (64.3 percent), *American Libraries* (78.6 percent), and *Wilson Library Bulletin* (51.8 percent).

It was not surprising that PLA's official journal *Public Libraries* is not widely read among directors in libraries serving populations of under 25,000, since these libraries are not typical of PLA's membership. Nor was it unexpected that the *Public Library Quarterly,* although it attempts to reach both the practitioner and the research communities, is not widely accessible to libraries in any of the size categories. The last column in the table displays the frequency distribution of journals read within the total population.

Questionnaire items 1 through 6 asked about the means (or dissemination channels) through which the library may have become aware of each of the manuals. The items were in a grid format in which the "means of access" formed the rows and the names of each manual formed the columns. Respondents were requested to check all columns that applied, so that each item became a "yes/no" variable relative to each manual. Means of access to information were defined as follows:

1. **staff** from our library have been to **informational meetings** about this manual
2. **staff** from our library have been to **workshops** that taught the use of this manual
3. **trustees** from our library have been to **informational meetings** about this manual
4. **trustees** from our library have been to **workshops** that taught the use of this manual
5. our library has received **information about this manual from the state library**
6. our staff has **read about this manual in professional journals**

Table 12. Frequency Distribution of Journals Read on a Regular Basis (by Library Size)

Journal	Library Size Category* 1 No. (%)	2 No. (%)	3 No. (%)	4 No. (%)	Total (%)
Library J.	40 (51.9)	45 (80.4)	85 (88.5)	49 (87.5)	219 (76.8)
state assoc. J.	51 (66.2)	41 (73.2)	73 (76.0)	42 (75.0)	207 (72.6)
American Libs.	11 (14.3)	25 (44.6)	62 (64.6)	44 (78.6)	142 (49.8)
Wilson L. Bul.	13 (16.9)	19 (33.9)	48 (50.0)	29 (51.8)	109 (38.2)
Public Libs.	06 (07.8)	17 (30.4)	36 (37.5)	36 (64.3)	95 (33.3)
Other	15 (19.5)	13 (23.2)	25 (26.0)	13 (23.2)	66 (23.2)
School Lib. J.	11 (14.3)	17 (30.4)	18 (18.8)	12 (21.4)	58 (20.4)
Public Lib. Q.	04 (05.2)	02 (03.6)	05 (05.2)	07 (12.5)	18 (06.3)
Totals	88	57	96	57	298

* 1: under 5,000; 2: 5,000-9,999; 3: 10,000-24,999; 5: 25,000-49,999

The two items concerning means of information access by trustees were included because the notion of board as well as community participation in planning is given major emphasis in the manuals. Also, the library's adoption of certain elements of the planning process (particularly those involving a financial commitment) would require the approval of the board. Item 6 was included as a direct measurement of journal access to information about the planning techniques.

"Yes" responses on the six items were summed to arrive at an "access to information" score for each of the manuals. Item analysis produced Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients of .8049 for the scale measuring access to information about APP and .8149 for the PRSM scale (Table 8). Both

were in the moderately high range indicating that, for this particular exploratory use, each scale showed a satisfactory level of internal consistency. Access to information is probably a promising enough variable for use in future library diffusion studies. However, a more precise measure should be developed.

One of the purposes of this study was to identify variables that might be related to the librarian's access to information. We used three of the variables discussed above: "level of education," "conferences attended," and "committee involvement" as independent variables, and "access to information" as the dependent variable in a series of t-tests. (The results of these and other t-tests that we conducted appear in Tables 13 through 15.)

Using the data from Table 11, we partitioned the respondents into two groups: those with an MLS degree (including those with education beyond the MLS) and those with lower levels of education. We eliminated the respondents in the "other masters degree" and "other" categories. We then conducted a t-test to determine if there were significant differences in the two groups with respect to their "information access" scores.

As indicated by the data in Table 13, there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the two groups on access to information about both the first planning manual ($t = -4.20$, $p = .000$) and the second manual ($t = -3.29$, $p. = .001$). The negative t-values merely indicate that the scores in group 2 (those with the MLS degree) were higher than the scores in group 1, which was expected. (It should also be explained that *SPSS*^{x} provides an F-test for equality of variance. If equal variances cannot be assumed, then a "pooled" variance estimate of the t-value is computed. When equal variances can be assumed, the formula for a separate variance estimate is used. This use of alternative formulas, as appropriate, explains why the degrees of freedom given in the tables may differ from test to test, even though the number of cases may be the same.)

It may be that individuals with the MLS degree are more aware of the existence of a variety of information sources and are more prone to seek out information from those sources than are those without the degree. Or it may be that the relationship is a spurious one, with another factor actually influencing the mean scores of each group. For example, larger libraries would be expected to employ directors with library science degrees more frequently than would smaller libraries. It seemed reasonable that the size of the library may actually be the characteristic differentiating between the two groups, rather than possession of the MLS.

Table 13. t-Tests of the Differences in Means on Selected Dependent Variables between Library Directors without the MLS and Those with the MLS (Group 1 = non-MLS Group 2 = MLS)

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	t-value	d.f.	2-tail prob.
Access-APP	1 (n=117)	6.49	1.07	-4.20	251	.000
	2 (n=136)	7.18	1.47			
Access-PRSM	1 (n=117)	7.02	1.60	-3.29	247.43	.001
	2 (n=136)	7.69	1.65			
Impl-APP	1 (n=117)	4.31	0.90	-2.42	251	.016
	2 (n=136)	4.62	1.11			
Impl-PRSM	1 (n=116)	5.72	1.38	-2.44	249.31	.016
	2 (n=136)	6.16	1.53			

Table 14. t-Tests of the Differences in Means on Selected Dependent Variables between Libraries Serving Populations under 10,000 (Group 1) and Those Serving 10,000 or Over (Group 2)

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	t-value	d.f.	2-tail prob.
Access-APP	1 (n=131)	6.61	1.14	-2.84	279	.005
	2 (n=150)	7.07	1.50			
Access-PRSM	1 (n=131)	7.08	1.57	-3.38	278.82	.001
	2 (n=150)	7.75	1.75			
Committees	1 (n=131)	.85	1.67	-3.69	280	.000
	2 (n=151)	1.87	2.76			

We conducted another series of t-tests, this time using "population served" as the independent variable. We partitioned the libraries into two groups based on the median population size of 10,000. Group 1 was composed of those libraries serving populations below 10,000, while group 2 included those serving populations of 10,000 and over. As expected, there were differences between the two groups. Significant t-values were obtained for access to information about APP (t= -2.84, p=.005) and for access to information about PRSM (t= -3.38, p=.001). T-test results appear in table 14.

We were also interested in whether the size of the library would have an influence on the extent to which the director is involved in the profession. Two additional t-tests were conducted using population as the independent variable. In one instance we used the number of conferences attended as the dependent variable, and in the other we used the number of association committee memberships. (There was doubt as to whether the data met the assumptions of normality; however, when the sample size is larger than 30, the t-distribution is said to approximate the standardized normal distribution.[13])

There was a significant difference between the two size categories in mean number of committee memberships (t = -3.69, p = .000), as reported in Table 14. However, there was no significant difference in the mean number of conferences attended. This finding suggests that the library's size is not a distinguishing factor with regard to all types of information access; that libraries serving under 10,000 people use the communication medium of conferences and workshops to about the same extent as do those serving between 10,000 and 50,000 people.

Committee membership may also be an indication of the "cosmopolite" behavior of the director. It will be recalled that cosmopolites are members of more than the average number of outside groups, and as such are often considered "opinion leaders" and may also be early adopters of innovation in that they bring new ideas from these outside reference points into their own social system. With that in mind, we also looked at conferences attended and committee memberships as **independent** variables, with access to information as the dependent variable.

In order to apply the t-test, we divided respondents into two groups on the basis of their attendance at conferences. We used the median score of 6, so that group 1 consisted of those with scores below the median, and group 2 had scores equal to, or above, the median. Again, because of the skewed distribution of responses, we also used the median score (0) rather than the mean, of association committee memberships in order to partition the responses into two groups: those with scores of 0 and those with scores of 1

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[13]Dean J. Champion, *Basic Statistics for Social Research* (Scranton, PA: Chandler Publishing Co.) 1970, p. 106-07.

or more. T-tests were then conducted to see if there were significant differences between the two groups with respect to these "access to information" variables.

As indicated in Table 15, the two groups with conference attendance as the distinguishing factor did differ significantly with respect to access to information about APP ($t = -4.31$, $p=.000$) as well as PRSM ($t = -5.36$, $p=.000$). Table 16 presents the results of the t-tests conducted between the two groups partitioned on the basis of number of association committees they reportedly served on. Once again, significant differences were observed on access to information about both manuals ($t = -4.19$, $p =.000$; $t= -3.21$, $p = .002$, respectively).

Adoption of Innovation

The study used several variables in order to develop "indicators of adoption" of the planning process. Included in the "grid" mentioned above were four "yes/no" questions (items 8, 10, 11, 12) concerning the use of the first planning manual:

8. our library **has used or is now using** this manual for long range planning
10. our library **has conducted user surveys** with this manual as a guide
11. our library has **conducted a community survey** with this manual as a guide
12. our library has used this manual to **form a planning committee**

The items reflected the topics or major elements contained in the manuals. "Yes" responses were summed to arrive at an "implementation" score for each library, which composed our first adoption indicator. The implementation measure on the planning and role setting manual consisted of the same four questions, plus the following item:

13. our library has **used the role setting** exercises in this manual

Item analysis was again used in order to estimate the internal consistency of the two scales for measuring implementation. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .8156 was obtained for the scale relating to the first planning manual and a reliability coefficient of .8235 was obtained for the scale measuring implementation of the second manual (Table 8). Both were in the moderately high range and the scales were therefore considered to have attained satisfactory levels of reliability. Included in Tables 13, 15, and 16 are the results of the t-tests conducted with implementation scores on each manual as the dependent variables.

Table 15. t-Tests of the Differences in Means on Selected Dependent Variables Between Library Directors Who Attended Under 6 Conferences and Those Who Attended 6 or More Conferences

(Group 1 < 6) (Group 2 = > 6)

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	t-value	d.f.	2-tail prob.
Access-APP	1 (n=133)	6.50	0.97	-4.31	279	.000
	2 (n=148)	7.18	1.56			
Access-PRSM	1 (n=133)	6.89	1.44	-5.36	279	.000
	2 (n=148)	7.93	1.77			
Impl-APP	1 (n=133)	4.21	0.78	-4.17	279	.000
	2 (n=148)	4.72	1.18			
Impl-PRSM	1 (n=132)	5.46	1.07	-5.80	279	.000
	2 (n=148)	6.16	1.53			

There were significant differences in mean scores on these two variables when the libraries were partitioned by possession of the MLS degree, by conferences attended, and by committee memberships. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in mean scores when population served was used as the independent variable. Earlier it was suggested that perhaps the discovered relationship between the MLS and access to information scores was obscuring the influence that library size has on both variables. This finding, plus the finding that there are no significant differences between population groups with respect to the number of conferences attended, casts some doubt upon the assumption of library size as a major influencing factor. A more feasible explanation may be that the influence of library size on the several dependent variables becomes strong enough to be observed as a result of its interaction with other variables rather than the other way around.

TABLE 16. t-Tests of the Differences in Means on Selected Dependent Variables Between Library Directors Who Reported No Committee Memberships and Those Who Reported One or More Memberships
(Group 1 = 0) (Group 2 = > 1)

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	S.D.	t-value	d.f.	2-tail prob.
Access-APP	1 (n=185)	6.62	1.21	-4.19	279	.000
	2 (n= 96)	7.18	1.52			
Access-PRSM	1 (n=185)	7.21	1.69	-3.21	279	.002
	2 (n= 96)	7.89	1.63			
Impl-APP	1 (n=185)	4.39	0.97	-2.01	279	.046
	2 (n= 96)	4.65	1.16			
Impl-PRSM	1 (n=184)	5.83	1.44	-5.80	278	.020
	2 (n= 96)	6.27	1.54			

The second variable relating to adoption was developed in order to determine the library's current "stage" in the adoption process (item 17 in the questionnaire):

17. With regard to the Public Library Association's suggested Planning Process, at which of the following stages is your library? Statements beneath each stage provide additional information. Please select one of the four stages listed below by circling its corresponding number. (Circle ONE number only). Next place a checkmark beside the statement that best describes your library's current situation.

1 Awareness Stage (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ NOT AWARE (Until now, we have never heard of the PLA Planning manuals)

_____ Aware, but NOT INTERESTED in learning more about the Planning Process

_____ Aware and INTERESTED in learning more about the Planning Process

2 Decision Stage (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ Decided NOT TO ADOPT AND USE the Planning Process
_____ Decided TO ADOPT AND USE the Planning Process

3 Adoption/Implementation Stage (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ NOT SATISFIED after using the Planning Process
_____ SATISFIED after using the Planning Process
_____ Currently using the Planning process; TOO EARLY TO ASSESS SATISFACTION

4 Continuance Stage (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ After completing one planning cycle, we have decided TO CONTINUE TO USE the Planning Process (either manual) when it is time to start working on our next long range plan
_____ After completing one planning cycle, we have decided NOT To USE (either the first or the revised) planning manual a second time.

5 Other Stage (Please describe)

Table 17 displays the frequency distribution of the four major adoption stages for each library size category and for the total sample. Table 18 provides additional information on how each major category is broken down and defined.

Sixty-two percent of the libraries (170) can be categorized as being in the awareness stage. Although it seems incongruous, included in this stage are also those libraries that are currently **not aware** of the innovation. As the phrasing of the categories in questionnaire item 17 indicates, progression through each of the adoption stages involves a series of decisions. The process could easily be visualized in the form of a decision tree whereby progress from one stage to another depends upon the answers to certain questions: Are you aware? If yes, are you interested? If yes, have you gathered enough information to make a decision? If yes, did you decide to adopt? And so forth.

Table 17. Frequency Distribution of Major Adoption Stages

Stage	Library Size Categories* 1	2	3	4	Total
1. Awareness	54 (67.5%)	40 (74.1%)	51 (58.6%)	25 (47.2%)	170 (62.0%)
2. Decision	4 (5.0%)	1 (1.9%)	12 (13.8%)	7 (13.2%)	24 (8.8%)
3. Adoption / Implementation	15 (18.8%)	9 (16.7%0	11 (12.6%)	14 (26.4%)	49 (17.9%)
4. Continuance	5 (6.3%)	2 (3.7%)	9 (10.3%)	6 (11.3%)	22 (8.0%)
5. Other	2 (2.5%)	2 (3.7%)	4 (4.6%)	1 (1.9%)	9 (3.3%)
totals	88	57	96	57	298

* 1: under 5,000; 2: 5,000-9,999; 3: 10,000-24,999; 5: 25,000-49,999

Making potential adopters aware is the first step in the diffusion process, so each library begins at the awareness stage. Yet some libraries may never actually reach the actual state of awareness. Others are included in this stage because they are aware of the innovation, but do not see its applicability to their particular situation, and are not interested. This group will not progress beyond the awareness stage unless something triggers a perception that the innovation may be of benefit to their library. Those who are aware and are interested are ready to progress to the second stage. They have heard of the innovation and feel that it may have some merit; therefore, they will actively seek additional information in order to make a decision about possible adoption.

Table 18. Frequency Distribution of Sub-Categories within Adoption Stages

Stage	Library Size * 1	2	3	4	Total
1 a) not aware	29 (36.3%)	19 (35.2%)	17 (19.5%)	7 (13.2%)	72 (26.3%)
1 b) aware, not interested	4 (5.0%)	1 (1.9%)	6 (6.9%)	2 (3.8%)	13 (4.7%)
1 c) aware and interested	21 (26.2%)	20 (37.0%)	28 (32.2%)	16 (30.2%)	85 (31.0)
2 a) decided to reject	2 (2.5%)	1 (1.9%)	3 (3.4%)	3 (5.7%)	9 (3.3%)
2 b) decided to adopt	2 (2.5%)	x (.0%)	9 (10.3%)	4 (7.5%)	15 (5.5%)
3 a) not satisfied	x (.0%)	x (.0%)	x (.0%)	1 (1.9%)	1 (.4%)
3 b) satisfied	1 (1.3%)	1 (1.9%)	1 (1.1%)	1 (1.9%)	4 (1.5%)
3 c) no assessment yet	14 (17.5%)	8 (14.8%)	10 (11.5%)	12 (22.6%)	44 (16.1%)
4 a) continuance	3 (3.8%)	2 (3.7%)	9 (10.3%)	6 (11.3%)	20 (7.3%)
4 b) non-continuance	2 (2.5%)	x (.0%)	x (.0%)	x (.0%)	2 (.7%)
other (undetermined)	2 (2.5%)	2 (3.7%)	4 (4.6%)	1 (1.9%)	9 (3.3%)
totals	88	57	96	57	298

* 1: under 5,000; 2: 5,000- 9,999; 3: 10,000-24,999; 4: 25,000-49,999

The combination of three of the stages shown in Table 17 (Decision, Adoption/Implementation, and Continuance) provide an indication of the percentage of libraries (34.7) which have been reached by the diffusion process. Each passed through the awareness stage and was able to access sufficient information concerning the planning manuals to make an adoption decision (for or against). Those who implemented the innovation passed through (or will pass through) another decision point--whether they consider the implementation successful or not.

When eventually joined by all of the other implementers, the libraries who made a decision concerning continuance or non-continuance will represent the consequence of the diffusion process. Assuming that PLA's diffusion attempt is successful (that is, assuming that the *existence* of the planning process becomes common knowledge among the library population), the ultimate outcome of the endeavor will not be known until all of the adopters have reached the continuance stage. An innovation is said to have been successfully diffused when its use becomes so routine and generally accepted within the population that it is no long "new."

From a visual examination of the data in Table 18, it appears that there are some size related differences with respect to adoption stages. The most obvious difference seems to be that there are greater proportions of "non-aware" libraries in groups 1 and 2 that serve under 10,000 people (36.3 percent and 35.2 percent) than in groups 3 and 4, serving over 10,000 people, (19.5 percent and 13.2 percent). There also appear to be differences between the two smaller and the two larger population groups with regard to the decision to adopt. The combined percentage in groups 1 and 2 that have decided to adopt is only 2.5 percent, while 17.8 percent of groups 3 and 4 have made that decision.

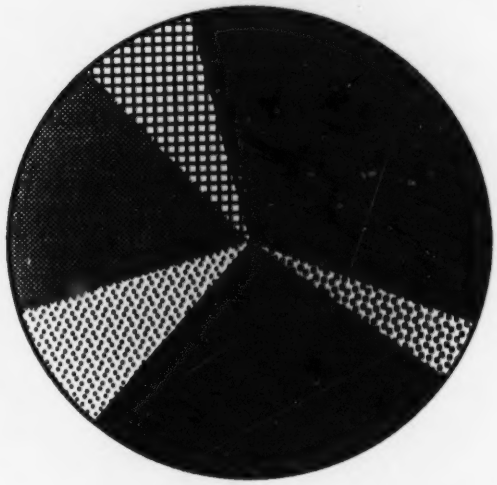
There is a slightly different pattern discernable within the "aware and interested" category. In the group of libraries serving between 5,000 and 9,999 people, 37 percent were aware and interested, while only 30 percent of the libraries serving 24,000 to 49,999 were in this category. If we look at these two groups with respect to an adoption decision, we find that none of the libraries in group 2 made the decision to adopt, while 7 percent of those in group 4 decided in favor of adoption.

By viewing the percentage of libraries in the aware and interested stage along with those in the adoption decision stage, we can perhaps hypothesize that libraries in group 2 will remain in the aware and interested stage longer than those in group 4 (that is, they will take more time to acquire the necessary information about the applicability of the innovation to their particular situation). Once having reached the decision stage, the percentage who adopt from group 2 will be smaller than the percentage of adopters from group 4.

We did not test whether these differences in adoption stage among size groups were significant; however, we used total population served as an independent variable in the hypothesis tests concerning implementation of the planning process. (Results of hypothesis testing are discussed below.)

Figure 1 displays the data contained in Table 18 in a format designed to illustrate more clearly the situation with regard to adoption stages.

Figure 1. Adoption Stages



aware and interested	31.0%
not interested	4.4%
not aware	26.3%
decision stage	8.8%
adoption/implementation stage	18.0%
continuance stage	8.0%
other	3.5%

By generalizing the study findings to the criterion population, we can estimate that over one-fourth of the small and medium sized public libraries are still unaware of the planning manuals despite a decade of diffusion efforts. Approximately one-third of the population are aware and are currently seeking additional information in order to make an adoption decision. Another one-fourth have implemented the innovation (including those who are in the continuance stage). It appears that the majority of adopters are opting to continue with the use of the planning process.

Diffusion of Innovation

Questionnaire item 19 dealt with the time of adoption. Respondents were asked "When did your library begin using the planning manuals to develop a written long range plan?" Options were:

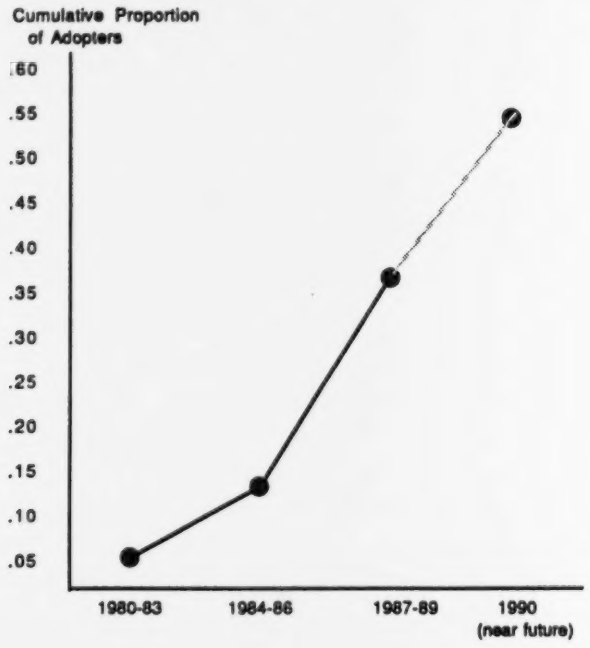
1. Not applicable, we are not using either of the manuals
2. Between 1980 and 1983
3. Between 1984 and 1986
4. Between 1987 and 1989
5. We intend to use the planning and role setting manual in the near future
6. don't know

In order to develop a graphic representation of the adoption of the innovation over time, we removed from the analysis those who were not using the manuals and those who did not know when they first began using them. The remaining respondents represented the estimated proportion of the population that had adopted the manuals or intended to adopt in the near future. The cumulative percentage of adopters over the entire time period is shown in the Figure 2 "diffusion curve." It should be kept in mind that time periods were approximate and were expressed in multiple year ranges, roughly corresponding to phases in the planning process development and diffusion life cycle:

1980-1983: publication and dissemination of APP/OMPL1
1984-1986: development of and information campaign about PLDP
1987-1989: Publication and dissemination of PLDP

This means of operationalizing the time variable, plus the fact that the data are dependent upon the memories of the respondents, limits the precision of the diffusion curve. Despite these limitations, the resulting curve is not unlike the S-shaped diffusion curve found in other studies (which in turn is similar to a typical "learning" curve). The rate of adoption begins slowly, then increases rapidly for a time, and finally it levels off.

Figure 2. Diffusion Curve



At the time of the survey, 36 percent of the sample had reportedly adopted the planning process; and an additional 19 percent indicated that they intended to implement the process in the "near future" (that is, they had made the decision to adopt). If we generalize these findings to the criterion population of public libraries serving fewer than 50,000 people, we can estimate that between 31 and 41 percent (36 percent with a margin of error of plus or minus .05) have implemented the innovation; and an additional 14 to 24 percent (19 percent with a margin of error of plus or minus .05) have adopted it. This brings our estimate of the cumulative proportion of adopters in the population to .56, plus or minus .05.

Tests of the Hypotheses

The first of two major hypotheses tested in the study concerned the influence on adoption behavior of the extent to which the state agency assumes a role in the dissemination process:

> As state agencies begin to assume a more significant role in dissemination, public libraries will tend to implement more facets of the innovation (that is, they will score higher on the implementation scale)

In order to test the hypothesis, we conducted a one-way analysis of variance by dividing the state agencies into three groups on the basis of the way each characterized its dissemination role: (1) no role; (2) a limited role; and (3) a significant role. The PRSM implementation score was used as the dependent variable. Table 19 displays the ANOVA results.

Since we obtained a significant F-ratio (F= 11.375, p = .000), we used the Scheffe procedure to determine between which pairs of groups the differences could be found. There was no difference between group 1 (no role) and group 2 (a limited role). Differences were identified between groups 1 (no role) and 3 (a significant role) and groups 2 (a limited role) and 3 (a significant role). It would appear that anything less than a substantial commitment on the part of the state agency to a dissemination role will have little effect on adoption.

This finding lends support to the hypothesis that adoption behavior is directly related to the extent of the diffusion role engaged in by the state library development agency.

Table 19. Analysis of Variance Summary: Implementation of PRSM by Dissemination Role

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	Prob.
Between groups (SS_b)	190.419	2	95.2097	11.375	.000
Within groups (SS_w)	1674.029	200	8.3701		
Total Variation (SS_{total})	1864.448	202			

109120

The purpose of the second hypothesis was to identify other variables that tend to influence the adoption behavior of public libraries:

> Adoption of the planning manuals is related to such variables as: size of library, access to information about the manuals, and the director's involvement in the profession.

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis, with "implementation of PRSM" as the dependent variable. We tried several regression equations in an attempt to identify the best combination of independent variables. Those we used as independent variables were: total population served, "access to information" score, number of conferences attended, number of committee memberships, total number of journals read, possession of the MLS (a dichotomous variable), and dissemination role (which was converted to a dichotomous "yes/no" variable). The two dichotomous variables were used as "dummy" variables in the regression analysis. The independent variables were selected on the basis of previous analysis of their relationship to implementation of PRSM.

When access to information about PRSM, number of conferences attended, and presence of a dissemination role were regressed on the dependent variable, we were able to explain 49 percent of the variance (adjusted R^2= .4885). Only the "information access" and the "conferences attended" variables had significant F-values, allowing them to enter into the equation.

Although we tried other combinations of variables, we found only one that produced an increase in the obtained R^2, but it was just a slight increase. By removing all but "information access," "conferences attended," and the two dummy variables ("dissemination role" and MLS) from the equation, we were able to increase the explained variance to 50 percent (Adjusted R^2 = .5031).

Table 20 summarizes the results of the analysis using this last regression equation in a stepwise forward procedure. This regression method enters independent variables one by one into the equation. The independent variable that explains the greatest amount of variance in the dependent variable (measured by its squared partial correlation with the dependent variable) enters first. The variable that explains the greatest amount of variance in combination with the first, enters second, and so

forth. At each step, F-ratios are computed for variables not yet in the equation. No additional variables enter and the process stops when the largest remaining partial F-value fails to meet a pre-established level.[14] In this case the .05 level was used.

Table 20. Implementation of PRSM Regressed on Information Access Score and No. of Conferences Attended

Analysis of Variance	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	Overall F Value
Regression	2	1087.9856	543.9928	128.0716
Residual	249	1057.6444	4.2476	(p = .000)

Variable	b	St.Err. of b	β	St.Err. of β	Simple R	Indiv.F
Inform. Access	.96577	.06632	.66815	.04514	.7004	240.779 (p = .000)
Conf.	.04083	.01416	.13231	.04588	.2953	8.317 (p = .004)
(Constant)	3.2101	.58286				

Multiple R = .7121	R^2=.5071	Adj. R^2 = .5031	St. Error =2.0610

The F-values for the MLS and diffusion role variables were too low for these variables to be entered into the regression equation, indicating that neither had a significant influence on the implementation of PRSM.

The analysis of variance summary in Table 20 relates to the overall test for "goodness of fit" of the regression equation. It tests the null hypothesis of no significant independent variables; that is, all the regression coefficients in the population are equal to zero (H_0: $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = 0$).

The overall F-value was 128.072, indicating that the access to information and conferences attended variables together are significant predictors of scores on the implementation of PRSM variable. In that the two variables only explained half of the variance, there is no evidence that this is

[14]Norman H. Nie, et al, *SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*, 2d ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), p.271.

the "best" combination of predictors (although it was the best that the study produced). There are undoubtedly additional variables among the many that were not examined in the study that should be explored as potentially good predictor variables.

The standardized regression coefficient (β or beta weight) indicates the direct effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, controlling for the other independent variables in the equation. Beta weights that are more than twice their standard error indicate an appreciable effect.[15] An examination of the beta weights in the table suggests that conference attendance (with a beta weight of .1323 and a standard error of .0458) has considerably less of a direct effect than does access to information (whose beta weight of .66815 is nearly 15 times the size of its standard error).

It is worth noting that the zero order correlation between information access to PRSM and implementation of PRSM is .73472. If we square this Pearson correlation $r^2 = .5398$. Unexplained variation (error) is measured by $1 - r^2$, while r^2 is the explained variation or the proportion in the variance that can be predicted from the information access variable. Therefore, without taking into account any interaction with other variables, information access can be said to account for some 54 percent of the variance in implementation of PRSM.

Our ability to reject the null hypothesis that implementation of PRSM is related to size of library, access to information, and the director's professional involvement is not indicated by the data. Although access to information and the number of conferences attended can be accepted as influencing factors, the remaining variables were not shown to be good predictor variables.

The most that we can say is that our data indicated that implementation of PRSM is a function of access to information about PRSM, and above average (or rather "above median") attendance at conferences and workshops, plus one or more unknown variables.

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[15]As explained in Peter M. Blau, *Organization of Academic Work* (New York: Wiley, 1973) p. 34-42.

Chapter IV

Conclusions and Synthesis

The development and diffusion of PLA's managerial innovation represents a unique situation in that the concept originated with the director and staff of a larger public library system that had been experimenting with planning techniques adapted from the private sector. Instead of spreading on this local level, however, the idea was diffused *upward* to the level of the national professional association. There it combined with compatible ideas that were then being debated in the Standards Revision Committee and other committees of PLA. The subsequent merging of the concept of long range planning with the idea that national standards should be replaced with a method for measuring local library effectiveness, became the seedbed for PLA's planning and evaluation techniques.

PLA recognized that the notion of long range planning was potentially useful in solving the major problem it had been confronting—that of redefining the public library's purpose in a changing society. The Standards Revision Committee of PLA saw the concept as an opportunity to "do something" about the credibility of national standards: give them a research base by using data collected from planning libraries in order to develop the standards.

In accepting the recommendation that the standards not be revised but be replaced with an instruction manual on how to engage in community based planning, the association assumed both a developmental and a dissemination role.

Through telephone interviews, mail surveys, and the examination of published and unpublished documents, the researchers explored the major phases in the life cycle of the innovation: its origination, development, diffusion, and adoption. We were interested in the fit between what had actually occurred and existing theoretical models of the development and dissemination of innovations.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions were drawn from the study. The major ones are briefly summarized below.

Comparisons with General Diffusion Models

One of the study's conclusions was that elements similar to those found in general diffusion models can indeed be identified in the development and diffusion of PLA's innovation: (1) networks or linkages among a number of different social systems[1]; (2) specific types of linking roles assumed by individuals[2]; (3) approaches that contain characteristics of the three general change strategies[3]; and (4) combined use of the several general categories of dissemination techniques[4].

1. **Linkages** were discovered among (a) the **federal government sector** (which provided development funds); (b) the **library education/scholarly community** (which provided resource people to aid in problem solving and scientific research); (c) the **private research sector** (which conducted applied research in the form of field studies, then developed and packaged the results); (d) **practicing public librarians** (some of whom were originators of the innovation, while others were the target audience of the dissemination process); (e) **state library development agencies** (which were cast in the role of target audience with respect to adopting the conceptual foundation of the innovation, as well as partners in the dissemination of the innovation to the local level); (f) the **professional media** (which performed an information dissemination role in publishing articles about the innovation); (g) the **Public Library Association;** (h) its parent organization, the **American Library Association** (which

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[1]R.G. Havelock, *Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Social Research, 1969.

[2]ibid.

[3]R. Chin and K.D. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems," in *The Planning of Change*, ed. G.W. Bennis, K.D. Benne, R. Chin and K.E. Corey (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976), p.22-40.

[4]as categorized by Egon Guba and discussed in Nancy Helburn Stein, "Causal Attributions and Effectiveness of Diffusion Techniques as Perceived by Physical Education Department Chairpersons," unpublished PhD dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, 1978, pp. 77-78.

provided advice along with administrative and other types of support); and (i) **state and regional library associations** (which like state agencies were both targets of the dissemination process and disseminators of the innovation).

2. Specific **types of linkage** roles included: (a) **conveyors** (who transferred knowledge from the research community to librarians in the field and to PLA members who were seeking solutions to change related problems); (b) **consultants** (who helped PLA to identify the planning techniques from other disciplines that could be adapted to the public library environment); (c) **trainers** (who conducted workshops); (d) **leaders** (who served to influence the opinions of others); (e) **innovators** (who initiated the search for solutions and brought new concepts into committee discussions); (f) **defenders** (who protected the interests of smaller libraries with regard to the innovation); and (g) **knowledge builders** (who served on PLA committees and were the project's goal setters and visionaries). A number of individuals assumed different linkage roles at different times as the innovation evolved from *A Planning Process for Public Libraries* and *Output Measures for Public Libraries* into the Public Library Development Program.

3. Characteristics of each of the **general types of dissemination strategies** were found with regard to PLA's innovation:

   a. The **rational-empirical** approach dominated the development of the first set of manuals in that much of the emphasis was on utilizing the services of resource people for applied research and field testing of the manuals and for "packaging" the results.

   b. The **normative-educative** approach was also utilized from the start as proponents of community based planning within PLA tried to "re-educate," first the leadership within the association itself (to accept the diversity of public libraries and hence the inadequacy of national standards, regardless of how "scientifically" derived); and later the librarians in the field (to manage with user needs and user satisfaction in mind rather than national standards). Once PLA made the official decision to dispense with any further editions of national standards, it began in earnest to apply normative-educative techniques via the professional literature, conferences, and workshops in order to "sell" librarians on the rationale behind the *concept* as well as on the use of the manuals.

c. PLA was not in a position to use the **power-coercive** approach; however, state library development agencies have the authority to mandate compliance and to use financial incentives and sanctions. A few states apparently took this dissemination approach, requiring that public libraries submit five year plans as a condition to the receipt of state aid; or requiring that selected output measures be gathered for inclusion in the annual statistical reports submitted to the states.

4. **Dissemination techniques** that were used can be categorized as: **telling, showing, helping, involving,** and **training,** with a few state agencies engaging in **intervening.**

The second conclusion is related to the first: that the development and dissemination process evidenced characteristics of each of the three general diffusion models as described by Havelock[5]: the Research, Development, and Diffusion (RD & D) Model; the Social Interaction (SI) Model; and the Problem-Solver (P-S) Model. In examining the networking activities that led to the development of the first planning and output measures manuals, the researchers found especially useful the application of Havelock's own Linkage Model that integrates certain features of the other three models and stresses the functions performed by the specific linkage roles discussed above.

We found that the progression of events and activities identified in our investigation of PLA's innovation could easily be divided into the stages outlined in the **RD & D** model of knowledge production and utilization: **research, development, packaging, and dissemination.**

We also found similarities to the **SI** model in that dissemination was heavily dependent upon networking activities (social interaction) between PLA, state agencies and associations, private consultants employed to train the trainers, regional library systems, and local libraries.

The **P-S** model views the adoption of innovation as an extension of the classic approach to problem solving: problem identification, generation of alternative solutions, selection and implementation of the optimal solution, and evaluation of the results. This model was appropriate as well, in that it describes the user as the initiator of change, with the help of outside change agents and other resource persons in problem diagnosis and in selecting and applying solutions. Much of what occurred from the early 1970s through the 1980s was the result of networking between PLA (as both user and change agent) and the various resource people from the practitioner, scholarly, and

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[5]Havelock (1969).

research communities whose help PLA had enlisted in order to solve the problems of what to do about national standards and how to measure library effectiveness.

Relationships between Dissemination and Adoption

A major conclusion resulting from the surveys of state agencies and public libraries is that adoption of the innovation is a function of the extent to which a library has **multiple channels of access** to information about the innovation. Although library size (as defined by total population served) was found to influence the committee memberships held by the director, it was not found to be strongly related to other means of information access. It was concluded that **size of the population served is not a good predictor, either of access to information or of adoption behavior.** This does not necessarily mean that library size has no influence. Other definitions of size (such as total number of volumes in the collection, number of full time equivalent staff members, total operating expenditures, number of service outlets, and so forth), which may combine to yield a more precise measure of the variable, were not investigated in the study.

The extent to which the director is active in the profession, defined as the number of conferences attended and the number of committee memberships, was explored as an indicator of "cosmopolite" behavior. Cosmopolites are individuals with ties to more than the average number of outside reference groups. They bring new ideas from the outside environment into their own social system, becoming opinion leaders, information gatekeepers, or innovators. The study discovered a relationship between the number of conferences attended and adoption of the innovation; however, the relationship was not strong enough to suggest that this variable can be viewed as a significant predictor of adoption. Nor was the number of committee memberships found to be a useful predictor variable.

The primary conclusion with regard to the dissemination role of state library agencies was that there was little influence on adoption when an agency assumed a dissemination role limited to the provision of information (telling) about the innovation. However, **when the agency took a significant role by engaging in a combination of showing, helping, involving, and training techniques, there was a significant influence on the extent to which the innovation was implemented by small and medium sized public libraries within the state.**

In generalizing the survey findings to the criterion population of public libraries serving populations of under 50,000, the researchers concluded that **the current cumulative proportion of adopters of the innovation is .56,** with a margin of error in this estimate of plus or minus 5 percent.

The diffusion curve provided by the study data indicated that the rate of diffusion among small and medium-sized public libraries has been slow. Although the measurement of time of adoption was imprecise, the resulting diffusion curve resembles the typical S-shaped diffusion curve found in studies of other types of organizations.

SYNTHESIS

Events and activities in the development and diffusion of PLA's innovation combine to reveal a complex network of linkages and interrelationships among individuals, groups, organizations, and social systems, with PLA at the center. There is no single path through this maze from innovator to user. Instead, the innovators were at times both the users and the developers, interacting with outside resource systems as the need arose. Resource people who were drawn into the project engaged in research, consulting, fund raising, development, and packaging. State agencies and the federal government provided money for development. Even prior to publication of the first manuals, practitioners provided feedback that led to an almost immediate decision to redesign and repackage the innovation.

Input and Feedback

The concept of linkages is not completely explained by the analogy to the "links" in a "chain" of knowledge utilization. Linkages in the diffusion process are not static relationships. The functional role assumed by a single linking agent may undergo several transformations over time. The same "linker" could easily appear at different nodes in the knowledge chain—perhaps a better simile would be the "web" of knowledge use—conveying, telling, training, consulting, or performing other linking functions between various groups.

At least one individual whom we interviewed indicated that it may not have been the difference in "packaging" of APP as compared with PRSM that made the second planning manual more acceptable to state agencies. The difference may have been the result of the "vested interest" on the part of those states who contributed money to the project.

Another feasible explanation may be found in PLA's eagerness, beginning almost immediately after the publication of APP, to seek and to act upon input and feedback from a number of sources, including state agencies. During the time between the publication of the two sets of planning manuals, a two-way exchange of information was occurring continuously between PLA, its resource people, and other constituencies. This communication was especially apparent in the relationship between the study team that was writing the PLDP manuals and PLA's New Standards Task Force. The NSTF (which

included practitioners receiving input from their colleagues in the field) served to link the study team to PLA and, via news releases, to additional resource people, practitioners, funding sources, and other groups.

What should be stressed is that the entire process—from origination to diffusion—depended upon such linkages to maintain a **reciprocal exchange** of information and an environment conducive to the transfer of knowledge.

Outcomes

One of the outcomes of the diffusion experience for PLA has been its heightened visibility in the library community and its enhanced credibility among state agency personnel and among many public librarians. In addition, those individuals within PLA who believed in and worked on the project gained a sense of satisfaction and of having made a significant contribution. They also seem to have gained an appreciation of the role of the researcher in advancing the practice of the profession. In the library as in other fields, there is sometimes a tendency to mistrust the ability of the scholar/researcher to understand and relate to the "real world" problems of the practitioner. PLA's innovation provided an opportunity for the two groups to interact and to forge linkages that should extend beyond this project to future endeavors.

The experience has encouraged PLA to strengthen its leadership position by developing other continuing education opportunities and by offering workshops at times and places that do not necessarily coincide with the dates and locations of national conferences. PLA has, so to speak, "come of age" through its experience.

Assessments will eventually be made of the value of the implementation of the planning and measurement techniques to public libraries and—more importantly—to their clienteles. Such assessments must wait until we can address the question: Have our public libraries, through the implementation of PLA's planning and evaluation techniques, become more effective community service agencies?

Whether or not the innovation is actually worthy of achieving wide dissemination and acceptance is not relevant here. What is important is what can be learned from PLA's endeavor with regard to the flow of information and knowledge within the public library community. More specifically, how can we improve the communication to and from small and medium sized public libraries?

Suggestions

As PLA recognized, the continuing educational and informational needs of local public libraries can best be met by those change agencies that are

closest to them geographically. State agencies and state and regional library associations can serve that purpose more effectively than national associations. Regional library systems and networks are even more effective as sources of continuing education. Why, then, have more than one fourth of the directors of small and medium-sized public libraries never heard of the planning manuals?

At least a partial answer may be provided by the change in tactics adopted by PLA when it began work on the PLDP. The association had learned from its experience with the earlier set of manuals that it needed to involve state agencies during development if it expected their help with dissemination. (PLA's planning process itself stresses citizen participation in local library decision making: One of the best ways to find out what people need and want from their libraries is to ask them.) Perhaps librarians in small and medium-sized public libraries should be encouraged to become full partners in the decision making that occurs on the regional and state levels. Although they are often on the receiving end of information, they are less often the *senders* of information. If the information being sent to smaller libraries is not perceived by the librarians as being particularly useful or relevant to their immediate problems, this may be a factor in why they are not *receiving* the information that is sent, and are remaining "unaware."

There are over 5,000 public libraries located in communities populated by fewer than 10,000 people. These smaller libraries are a fact of life; attempts to incorporate or consolidate them into larger units of service have not been successful. Attempts to mandate that libraries in these communities hire directors with an MLS degree have proven unrealistic and difficult to enforce, given the budgetary limitations imposed by a small tax base. Yet the people living in small communities should certainly be entitled to a level of library service equivalent to that available in larger communities.

The individuals who head our smaller public libraries have a tremendous need for continuing education in managerial as well as practitioner skills. They also know their own library environment and its specific problems. Perhaps if they were brought into group problem solving sessions that addressed their own concerns and were helped to arrive at feasible solutions, they might learn to become more effective initiators of change within their own libraries.

Practitioners of larger libraries, working through PLA were able to become innovators because they had ready access to each other and to outside resource people who could aid in their problem solving and suggest solutions. Librarians in smaller libraries lack that ready access. They are often isolated even from other librarians in their own states who have similar problems. Methods should be sought that will facilitate the reciprocal exchange of information among directors of smaller libraries, their peers, and outside change agents, including state library development agency personnel.

If prescriptive national standards are not the answer, perhaps "prescriptive" innovations are equally inappropriate. Mandating five year plans or the collection of output measures will not guarantee improved services unless public librarians understand in concrete terms how such activities will benefit *their community* libraries, rather than libraries in general.

Much more effort on the state level might be placed on the "normative-educative" approach in order to prepare the way for future innovations. Librarians in smaller library situations must feel accepted by the profession and share the values of the profession with regard to the public library. Otherwise, they may continue to believe that "things are working fine as it is"; and not see the need to initiate change nor to investigate the feasibility of innovations.

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APPENDIX A: Interview Inquiry Letter

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY
and INFORMATION SCIENCE
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-2018 (Administration)
(812) 855-5113 (Faculty)

November 23, 1988

Dear Colleague:

We are conducting a national study, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, of the diffusion of the Public Library Planning Process. The purpose of the study is to document the methods and channels used on national, state, and regional levels to disseminate information, train planners, and promote the adoption of the process. Such a study should provide insight useful to ongoing and future efforts by PLA and others to diffuse administrative innovations among public librarians.

Because of your participation in the development and evolution of the planning process, we would like to conduct a telephone interview with you concerning:

(1) the goals and objectives of the Public Library Association with regard to the planning process and the Public Library Development Program;
(2) the methods and strategies PLA has used over the past decade to implement those objectives; and
(3) your thoughts in general about diffusing management innovations among a group as diverse as public libraries.

Enclosed is a return post card on which to indicate whether you are willing to be interviewed.

Your assistance in providing an insider's perspective of the evolution of the planning process will be helpful as we design survey instruments for use with state library development agencies and state library associations in order to examine diffusion efforts nationwide.

We hope that you will consider our request favorably.

Sincerely,

Verna L. Pungitore

Verna L. Pungitore
Principal Investigator
Planning Process Diffusion Project

RETURN POST CARD

___No, I would prefer not to be interviewed concerning the public library planning process and PLDP

___Yes, I am willing to be interviewed by phone

Name_____

Phone number(s)_____

If you checked yes, we will call you to set up a convenient time for the interview.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY
and INFORMATION SCIENCE
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-2018 (Administration)
(812) 855-5113 (Faculty)

Dear

Thank you for your prompt reply to our request for a telephone interview regarding the Planning Process for Public Libraries and the Public Library Development Program.

In the past month or so we have been reviewing the published record to ensure that we have a sufficient understanding of the sequence of events which led to the PLDP so that the time spent in the interview will provide additional, rather than redundant, information. We will be contacting you within the next two weeks to arrange the telephone interview at your convenience.

Enclosed is a preliminary attempt at devising a chronology of PLA activities from the late sixties through publication of the PLDP manuals in 1987. We intend to bring the chronology up to date and to use it as a frame of reference. Please inform us of any factual errors or significant omissions you happen to notice.

The diffusion model which we are using in the study suggests that knowledge flows back and forth through a complex network of linkage roles and relationships, often formed by overlapping organizational memberships. We would like to see how closely the idealized model fits the reality by exploring some of these possible linking roles with you. A list of the roles we have identified is enclosed. During the interview we will be asking you to consider whether these roles were filled, either by you or by someone else, at various points in the development and dissemination stages.

Since the diffusion process was initiated more than a decade ago, we hope the enclosed items, particularly the chronology, might serve as a memory aid. We actively seek confirmation and/or criticism of our "outsider" perspective on PLA's continuing efforts toward public library development nationwide.

Sincerely,

Verna L. Pungitore
Planning Process Diffusion Project

Jay Wilkerson
Research Assistant

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-2018 (Administration)
(812) 855-5113 (Faculty)

March 10, 1989

Dear Colleague:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study of the dissemination of the Public Library Association's planning process and Public Library Development Program being conducted by the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University and funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

Our goal is to better understand the formal and informal networking which occurs as information is transferred among individuals with overlapping memberships in various library organizations (public libraries, state library development agencies, library associations, and so forth).

The evolution of the original planning process into the current Public Library Development Program seems to suggest that feedback from practicing librarians, as well as the agencies and organizations that serve to link the practitioners to the developers, can be a very important factor in the overall dissemination process. For this reason, we hope that your agency will be able to participate in our study.

The majority of items on the questionnaire are multiple choice, so answering the survey will not be as time consuming as the number of pages may suggest. If there is someone else on your staff who is more directly involved with public library development, we hope you will pass the questionnaire along to that individual for completion.

The completed questionnaire should be returned by April 3, 1989 to:

Lanju Yoon
Indiana University
School of Library and Information Science
Bloomington, IN 47405

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Verna L. Pungitore
Project Director

1

Survey of the Role of State Library Development Agencies in the Dissemination of the Public Library Development Program

The following questions are being asked in connection with a study, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, of the development and dissemination of the Public Library Association's original planning process and its current Public Library Development Program (PLDP). The purpose of the study is to add to the general understanding of how knowledge and innovations are disseminated among the diverse population of public librarians. We are particularly interested in the role that state library development agencies may play in the transfer of information.

All responses are strictly confidential. No individual person or state agency will ever be identified in any report from this study.

1. **Position** or **title** of the person completing this form_____

2. How long have you served in this position?_____

3. We would like to get a general idea of the ways in which your agency interacts with the American Library Association, the Public Library Association, and your state library association. Five statements are listed below. The columns preceding the list represent the three library associations. If a statement applies to one or more of the associations, please place a check mark in the appropriate column(s).

ALA	PLA	State Assoc.	
___	___	___	1. Our agency is an institutional member of the association.
___	___	___	2. One or more agency staff members are personal members of the association.
___	___	___	3. One or more agency staff members are sent to each annual or major conference.
___	___	___	4. Agency provides travel expenses and/or time off to encourage staff to become active in the association (hold office, work on committees).
___	___	___	5. A staff member is designated to serve as the agency's liaison with the association.

Directions: Most of the items on the rest of the survey are "multiple choice." To answer, you need only **circle the number** corresponding to the most appropriate response. Depending on your responses, you may at various points be directed to skip over several questions. Unless so directed, please try to answer every item.

PART A. **Long Range, Community-Based Planning.** The items in this part of the questionnaire deal with long range and/or community-based planning in general, without reference to any specific planning techniques.

4. Does the state library agency engage in specific activities for the purpose of encouraging individual public libraries to engage in long range planning?

   1 yes 2 no **(if you answered "no" by circling 2,** skip to Part B at the top of page 4)

5. How does the state agency attempt to promote long range planning among public libraries? Please circle numbers corresponding to as many methods as apply:

   1 by holding **informational meetings** or conferences to introduce the topic of formal planning

   2 by conducting **workshops** to teach planning techniques

   3 by providing individualized **consultant** visits to libraries to get them started in planning

   4 by **referring** interested librarians to outside consultants

   5 by **mandating** that each library produce a long range plan

   6 by **withholding state aid** or other funding from libraries that do not engage in long range planning

   7 by providing **incentives** (please specify or describe)

   8 **other methods** (please describe)

6. In your opinion, how high a priority does your agency place on encouraging public librarians to learn and to use formal planning techniques? Please circle the number corresponding to **one** of the following:

   0 no opinion

   1 **not** a priority

   2 a **low** priority

   3 a **somewhat high** priority

   4 a **high** priority

   5 the **top** priority

7. Does encouraging public librarians to learn and to use formal planning techniques appear as a goal or objective in your state's own long range plan for library development? Please circle the number corresponding to **one** of the following:

   0 don't know

   1 it is **not mentioned**

   2 it is **referred to**, but is not a stated goal or objective

   3 it is a **written goal or objective**

8. Has your state library development agency ever used any of its Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) money to promote community-based, long range planning?

   0 don't know 1 no 2 yes (please use the space below to describe the use)

PART B. **Public Library Standards.** The next several questions relate to state and national standards for public libraries.

9. What influence, if any, has PLA's decision against revising the 1966 national standards had on your state's position with regard to **state level standards** for public libraries?

   0 **don't know**

   1 **no** influence

   2 **some** influence

   3 **considerable** influence

10. Where does your state stand with regard to **state level standards**? Please circle the number beside the response which most closely describes the current situation:

   1 there are no state public library standards currently in use, and there are **no immediate plans to develop standards**

   2 there are no state public library standards currently in use, but the state **intends to develop standards** within the near future

   3 there are state public library standards that are being used, but they are out-of-date and there are **no current plans for their revision**

   4 state standards (or revisions of state standards) are **currently under development**

   5 there are **up-to-date state standards** for public libraries which are **now in use**

11. If your state has a current set of public library standards, or if you intend to develop or revise state standards, do they (will they) include any of the Public Library Association's suggested output measures? Please circle the number beside **one** of the responses below:

   0 **not applicable**

   1 **no**, the standards do not (will not) include any of PLA's output measures

   2 **no**, although the standards do not (will not) include any of PLA's output measures, the state has or will develop its own output measures

   3 **yes**, the standards do (will) include one or more of PLA's output measures

   4 **yes**, the standards do (will) include one or more of PLA's output measures, plus one or more state developed output measures

PART C. **Planning Process for Public Libraries.** The items in this part of the questionnaire deal specifically with the first planning manual (A Planning Process for Public Libraries) published by PLA in 1980 and the first edition of Output Measures for Public Libraries published in 1982. We are interested in the extent to which your state agency played a role in disseminating the procedures outlined in those manuals. Although we are dealing with past events, we hope you will be able to reconstruct the situation as it existed prior to publication of the new manuals in 1987.

12. Approximately when did your agency become aware that the Public Library Association intended to replace national standards with a recommended process for community-based planning and measurement?

    0 don't know

    1 prior to 1975

    2 1976 - 1980

    3 after 1980

13. How did your agency first become aware of PLA's planning process for public libraries?

    0 don't know

    1 through **articles in the library literature**

    2 through **informal, word-of-mouth channels**

    3 through **direct communication from ALA/PLA**

    4 through **PLA-sponsored pre-conferences or workshops**

    5 through **ALA conferences or meetings**

    6 other (please describe)

14. Did you or other agency staff have any role or involvement in the development and/or evaluation of the planning process manual for PLA?

0 don't know 1 no 2 yes (please describe briefly)

15. Did you or other agency staff have any role or involvement in the development and/or evaluation of the output measures manual for PLA?

0 don't know 1 no 2 yes (please describe briefly)

16. Which of the following best describes your agency's **initial** reaction to PLA's decision to replace its national standards with a recommended planning process?

0 don't know

1 **strongly supportive** of the idea

2 **supportive** of the idea

3 **neutral** to the idea

4 **skeptical** of the idea

5 **strongly skeptical** of the idea

17. Which of the following best describes your agency's **initial** reaction to the planning process manual itself?

    0 **no** reaction or don't know

    1 **strongly positive** reaction

    2 **positive** reaction

    3 **mixed** reaction

    4 **negative** reaction

    5 **strongly negative** reaction

18. Listed below are several criteria that might be used to evaluate self-help manuals. **With the planning process manual in mind,** please rate each of the criteria by circling the number in the appropriate column on the adjacent scale.

Criteria	No Opinion	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1. Explanations are clear and easy to follow	0	1	2	3	4
2. Topics are arranged logically	0	1	2	3	4
3. Process is "do-able" by intended user	0	1	2	3	4
4. Adequate examples are given in the text	0	1	2	3	4
5. Process can be tailored to needs of the user	0	1	2	3	4

19. In terms of the **content** of the planning process manual, how would you rate the **overall quality** of the information provided on each of the following planning elements? For each item, please circle the number under the appropriate column.

Information On	No Opinion	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1. planning committee	0	1	2	3	4
2. community analysis	0	1	2	3	4
3. assessment of current library resources/services	0	1	2	3	4
4. determining the library's role in the community	0	1	2	3	4
5. setting goals, objectives, priorities	0	1	2	3	4
6. implementing strategies for change	0	1	2	3	4
7. measuring performance	0	1	2	3	4
8. re-cycling the process	0	1	2	3	4

20. Which of the following best describes the decision made by your agency concerning its role with respect to disseminating the original planning process manual?

0 **no decision** was made

1 we decided **not to take a role** in disseminating the planning process

2 we decided to **undertake a limited role** (such as providing information about the manual only)

3 we decided to **undertake a significant role** (by promoting the widespread use of the manual)

21. Please briefly **explain why** your agency made the decision indicated in question #20.

If your agency decided not to take a role in disseminating the planning process manual, please skip to question #28 on page 11.

22. Did your agency provide any financial aid, planning grants, or other **incentives** to encourage use of the planning process manual?

    1 no 2 yes (please describe the type of incentives you used)

23. What other methods did your agency use to encourage public libraries to adopt the planning process? Please circle the numbers next to as many methods as apply.

    1 provision of **information** about the planning process through **mailings** to public librarians

    2 provision of **information** about the planning process through state library **journals/newsletters**

    3 provision of **information** about the planning process at **state or regional conferences/meetings**

    4 provision of **information** about **actual use** of the planning manual (e.g., state agency sponsored forums or panel discussions with invited speakers describing their experiences with the manual)

    5 provision of **introductory workshops** aimed at **convincing** participants that they should use the planning manual

    6 provision of **workshops** on how to use the manual conducted by **state agency staff**

    7 provision of **workshops** on how to use the manual conducted by **outside presenters or consultants**

    8 **consultation** visits by state library agency staff to individual public libraries

    9 **mandating** that each public library submit a long range plan based on use of the planning process manual

    0 other (please describe)

24. During the time when your agency was encouraging the use of the planning manual, **what methods were used to obtain feedback** from public librarians? Circle the numbers corresponding to as many methods as apply.

    1 informal, word-of-mouth feedback

    2 formal (written) feedback requested from conference or workshop participants

    3 formal (written) feedback requested from librarians who had used the manual

    4 other (please describe)

25. During the time when your agency was encouraging the use of the planning manual, what sort of **reaction did you experience from public librarians**? Please circle the number corresponding to the response which best characterizes the general reaction to the planning process manual by librarians in your state.

    0 no observable reaction

    1 generally favorable reaction

    2 some resistance

    3 considerable resistance

    4 initial resistance which lessened over time

    5 initial resistance which increased over time

26. To what extent did the smaller public libraries differ from larger libraries with regard to the rate at which they adopted (implemented) the planning process?

    1 **much faster** adoption rate among smaller public libraries

    2 **slightly faster** adoption rate among smaller public libraries

    3 **little or no difference** in adoption rate

    4 **slightly faster** adoption rate among larger public libraries

    5 **much faster** adoption rate among larger public libraries

27. If you encountered resistance to the use of the process, which of the following reasons were given? Please circle the numbers corresponding to as many of the reasons as apply.

0 encountered very little or no resistance

1 process is too expensive

2 process is too time-consuming

3 manual is confusing

4 manual is difficult to use

5 library is too small to engage in long range planning

6 existing planning techniques are adequate

7 staff already knows what the community wants/needs

8 trustees do not approve

9 other reasons (please list)

28. After the first edition of the output measures manual was published in 1982 (and before the second edition came out in 1987), did your agency attempt to test or evaluate any of the output measures described in the manual to determine whether they could be easily adopted by libraries in your state?

1 no 2 yes (please indicate the results)

29. Were any of the following methods used to encourage public libraries to adopt output measures? Please circle numbers corresponding to as many methods as apply.

1 provision of **information** about output measures through **mailings** to public librarians

2 provision of **information** about output measures through state library **journals/newsletters**

3 provision of **information** about output measures at **state or regional conferences/meetings**

4 provision of **information** about **actual use** of output measures (e.g., state agency sponsored forums or panel discussions with invited speakers describing their experiences with output measures)

5 provision of **introductory workshops** aimed at **convincing** participants that they should use output measures)

6 provision of **workshops** on how to collect output measures conducted by **state agency staff**

7 provision of workshops on how to collect output measures conducted by **outside presenters or consultants**

8 **consultation** visits by state library agency staff to individual public libraries

9 inclusion of output measures among the statistics requested **in the library's annual report to the state**

0 other (please describe)

PART D. **The Public Library Development Program (PLDP).** The items in this part of the questionnaire refer specifically to the Planning and Role Setting Manual and the second edition of Output Measures for Public Libraries which were published in 1987 and which are collectively referred to as PLA's "Public Library Development Program."

30. Was your state agency among those that contributed funds to PLA for use in developing and publishing the new planning manuals?

1 no 2 yes

31. Were any public libraries in your state among those who field tested the manuals for PLA?

1 no 2 yes

32. How did your agency **first become aware** of the Public Library Development Program?

0 don't know

1 our agency was asked by PLA to contribute money toward preparation of the new manuals

2 through reading advanced information about PLDP in library journals

3 through informal, word-of-mouth communications among colleagues

4 through attendance at the ALA conference in 1987 when the new manuals were first presented and discussed

5 through attendance at other ALA conferences

6 through attendance at PLA conferences

7 through involvement of agency staff in the development of the new manuals

8 other (please describe)

33. Which of the following best characterizes your agency's general opinion of the planning and role setting manual as compared with the planning process manual:

0 no opinion

1 about equal in usefulness

2 first manual was more useful

3 new manual is more useful

34. In terms of the **content** of the planning and role setting manual, how would you rate the **overall quality** of the information provided on each of the following topics? For each item, please circle the number under the appropriate column.

Information On	No Opinion	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1. planning committee	0	1	2	3	4
2. community analysis ("Looking Around")	0	1	2	3	4
3. assessment of current library resources/services	0	1	2	3	4
4. developing roles and mission	0	1	2	3	4
5. setting goals, objectives, priorities	0	1	2	3	4
6. implementing strategies for change ("Taking Action")	0	1	2	3	4
7. writing the planning document	0	1	2	3	4
8. measuring performance ("Reviewing Results")	0	1	2	3	4
9. re-cycling the process	0	1	2	3	4

35. Listed below are several criteria that might be used to evaluate self-help manuals. **With the planning and role setting manual in mind**, please rank each of the criteria by circling the number in the appropriate column on the adjacent scale.

Criteria	No Opinion	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1. Explanations are clear and easy to follow	0	1	2	3	4
2. Topics are arranged logically	0	1	2	3	4
3. Process is "do-able" by intended user	0	1	2	3	4
4. Adequate examples are given in the text	0	1	2	3	4
5. Process can be tailored to needs of the user	0	1	2	3	4

36. Which of the following best describes the decision made by your agency concerning its role with respect to disseminating the **planning and role setting manual**?

    0 **no decision** was made

    1 we decided **not to take a role** in disseminating the manual

    2 we decided to **undertake a limited role** (such as providing information about the manual only)

    3 we decided to **undertake a significant role** (by promoting the widespread use of the manual)

37. Please briefly **explain why** your agency made the decision indicated in question #36.

If your agency decided not to take a role in disseminating the planning and role setting manual, please skip to question #44 on page 18.

38. Does your agency provide any financial aid, planning grants or other **incentives** to encourage use of the planning and role setting process?

    1 no 2 yes (please describe the type of incentives you have used or are using)

39. What other methods have you used, or are you now using, to encourage public libraries to adopt the new planning manual?

1 provision of **information** about planning and role setting through **mailings** to public librarians

2 provision of **information** about planning and role setting through state library **journals/newsletters**

3 provision of **information** about planning and role setting at **state or regional conferences/meetings**

4 provision of **information** about **actual use** of the new planning manual (e.g., state agency sponsored forums or panel discussions with invited speakers describing their experiences with the manual)

5 provision of **introductory workshops** aimed at **convincing** participants that they should use the new planning manual

6 provision of **workshops** on how to use the manual conducted by **state agency staff**

7 provision of **workshops** on how to use the manual conducted by **outside presenters or consultants**

8 **consultation** visits by state library agency staff to individual public libraries

9 **mandating** that each public library submit a long range plan based on use of the planning and role setting manual

0 other (please describe)

40. To which of the following groups are you disseminating information and/or training in planning and role setting:

1 public librarians only

2 public librarians and library trustees jointly

3 public librarians and library trustees separately

41. What methods have you used or are you using to **obtain feedback** on the **planning and role setting manual** from public librarians? Circle the numbers corresponding to as many methods as apply.

1 informal, word-of-mouth feedback

2 written feedback requested from workshop/meeting participants

3 written feedback requested from users of the manual

4 other (please describe)

42. What sort of **reaction** to the **planning and role setting manual** are you experiencing from public librarians? Please circle the number corresponding to the response that best characterizes the general reaction.

0 no observable reaction

1 favorable reaction

2 strongly favorable reaction

3 mixed reaction

4 resistance

5 considerable resistance

43. If you are encountering resistance to the use of the planning and role setting manual, which of the following are probable **reasons for the resistance**? Circle the numbers corresponding to as many reasons as apply.

0 little or no resistance encountered

1 process is too expensive

2 process is too time-consuming

3 manual is confusing

4 manual is difficult to use

5 library is too small to engage in long range planning

6 staff already knows what community needs/wants

7 existing planning techniques are adequate

8 trustees do not approve

9 other reasons (please list)

44. Does your agency keep a listing of the public libraries that have implemented the planning and role setting process?

1 no 2 yes (Would you be willing to share that list with us? __yes __no)

45. Approximately how many public libraries in your state have begun using the planning and role setting manual?

_____ (approximate number) or _____ (approximate percentage)

46. To what extent do the smaller public libraries differ from larger libraries with regard to the rate at which they are adopting (implementing) the planning and role setting process?

    1 **much faster** adoption rate among smaller public libraries

    2 **slightly faster** adoption rate among smaller public libraries

    3 **little or no difference** in adoption rate

    4 **slightly faster** adoption rate among larger public libraries

    5 **much faster** adoption rate among larger public libraries

47. Which of the following best characterizes your agency's general opinion of the second edition of the **output measures manual** as compared with the first edition?

    0 no opinion

    1 about equal in usefulness

    2 first edition was more useful

    3 second edition is more useful

48. To what extent has your agency promoted the use of output measures?

    1 no attempt has been made to promote output measures

    2 promotion of output measures has been continuous since publication of the first edition of the manual

    3 promotion of output measures has begun since the publication of the second edition of the output measures manual

    4 the agency has not promoted output measures in the past, but intends to promote their use in the future

49. Are any of the following methods being used to encourage public libraries to adopt output measures now that the second edition of the manual has been published? Please circle numbers corresponding to as many methods as apply.

1 provision of **information** about output measures through **mailings** to public librarians

2 provision of **information** about output measures through state library **journals/newsletters**

3 provision of **information** about output measures at **state or regional conferences/meetings**

4 provision of **information** about **actual use** of output meausres (e.g., state agency sponsored forums or panel discussions with invited speakers describing their experiences with output measures)

5 provision of **introductory workshops** aimed at **convincing** participants that they should use output measures

6 provision of **workshops** on how to collect output measures conducted by **state agency staff**

7 provision of **workshops** on how to collect output measures conducted by **outside presenters or consultants**

8 **consultation** visits by state library agency staff to individual public libraries

9 inclusion of output measures among the statistics requested **in the library's annual report to the state**

0 other (please describe)

50. What barriers, if any, do you see to the widespread use of the planning and role setting manual in your state?

51. What barriers, if any, do you see to the widespread use of the output measures manual in your state?

52. What conditions, if any, are there in your state that might facilitate or encourage the use of the planning and role setting manual?

53. What conditions, if any, are there in your state that might facilitate or encourage the use of the output measures manual?

Thank you very much for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed, stamped envelope to:

Lanju Yoon
Indiana University
School of Library and Information Science
Bloomington, IN 47405

54. You are invited to use the space below and the back of this sheet for any additional comments you might have about community-based planning, state/national standards, output measures, or PLDP.

APPENDIX B: STATE AGENCY FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD

This is a follow-up on a questionnaire about the Public Library Planning Process which we sent to your agency several weeks ago. Please check an appropriate response below and return this post card to us. Thank you.

___ We have completed and returned the questionnaire.

___ We intend to complete and return the questionnaire.

___ We've lost the questionnaire; please send another.

___ We prefer not to participate in the study.

APPENDIX C: LIBRARY DIRECTOR COVER LETTER

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-2018 (Administration)
(812) 855-5113 (Faculty)

June 16, 1989

Dear Colleague:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study of the Public Library Association's planning process and Public Library Development Program. The study is being conducted by the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

PLA, which in the past has published minimal standards for public libraries, is now convinced that local planning should take the place of such national standards. A ten-year effort (mostly on the national level by PLA, but also on the part of many state library development agencies) has gone into promoting the use of PLA's planning and output measures manuals. Our study will look at how successful that effort has been in terms of smaller and medium-sized public libraries.

Far too often the point of view of smaller public libraries is neglected in favor of trends and developments appropriate to larger libraries. Yet two-thirds of the nation's public libraries serve relatively small communities. We believe that it is vital to learn as much as possible about the operations of smaller libraries, in order to make sure that their needs are not overlooked.

Our study will not provide all the answers. But it is a step toward giving small and medium-sized public libraries a chance to be heard by national policy makers, at least with regard to the issue of community-based planning. Your participation in the study is essential if we are to get a realistic picture of the extent to which library developments on the national scene have an influence on the day-to-day operations of local public libraries.

We are asking that you, as director of the library, complete the questionnaire personally. The majority of items on the questionnaire are in either a checklist or multiple choice format so as to take up as little of your time as possible.

The completed questionnaire should be returned by June 30, 1989 to:

Verna L. Pungitore
Indiana University
School of Library and Information Science
Bloomington, IN 47405

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Verna L. Pungitore
Project Director

A Survey of the Response of Small and Medium-sized Public Libraries to the Public Library Planning Manuals

This questionnaire is part of a nationwide study, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, of the extent to which small and medium-sized public libraries throughout the country are aware of and are using the Public Library Association's community-based planning techniques and output measurements.

All responses are strictly confidential. No individual person or library will ever be identified in any report of this study.

DIRECTIONS: There are four parts to the questionnaire, which begins on the reverse side of this page. For the most part, the questions are in the form of a checklist or are multiple choice. Please try to answer every question. It should take about fifteen minutes to complete the survey.

Below are the abbreviations used in the survey for each of the four planning and evaluation manuals produced by the Public Library Association. APP and OMPL-I are the first editions, no longer in print. PRSM and OMPL-II are the new versions of the manuals that the Public Library Association refers to collectively as "The Public Library Development Program" (PLDP).

APP	A Planning Process for Public Libraries. Palmour, 1980.
OMPL-I	Output Measures for Public Libraries. lst ed. Zweizig and others, 1982.
PRSM	Planning & Role Setting for Public Libraries. McClure and others, 1987.
OMPL-II	Output Measures for Public Libraries. 2nd ed. Van House and others, 1987.

PART I. **Your Library and the Dissemination of Information about the Planning Manuals.** Below are a series of statements about the manuals. Listed in columns across the top of the page are the abbreviations for each of the manuals. If the statement to the left is true with respect to your library and one or more of these manuals, please place a checkmark in the appropriate column or columns to the right of the statement.

Although you may have encountered the planning process manuals while working in a different library, please answer the questions in this part of the survey with your current library in mind.

	APP (1980)	PRSM (1987)	OMPL-I (1982)	OMPL-II (1987)
1. staff from our library have been to informational meetings about this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. staff from our library have been to workshops that taught the use of this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. trustees from our library have been to informational meetings about this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. trustees from our library have been to workshops that taught the use of this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. our library has received information about this manual from the state library	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. our staff has read about this manual in professional journals	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. our library owns a copy of this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. our library has used or is now using this manual for long range planning	_____	_____	does not apply	does not apply
9. a written long range plan has resulted from our use of this manual	_____	_____	does not apply	does not apply

	APP (1980)	PRSM (1987)	OMPL-I (1982)	OMPL-II (1987)
10. our library has conducted user surveys with this manual as a guide	_____	_____	does not apply	does not apply
11. our library has conducted a community survey with this manual as a guide	_____	_____	does not apply	does not apply
12. our library used this manual to form a planning committee	_____	_____	does not apply	does not apply
13. our library has used the role setting exercises in this manual	does not apply	_____	does not apply	does not apply
14. we are using one or more of the output measures described in this manual	does not apply	does not apply	_____	_____
15. our library intends to use this manual in the near future	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. our library decided not to use this manual	_____	_____	_____	_____

PART II. **Your Library and the Adoption Process.** Supposedly, there are certain "stages" an organization (in this case, a public library) goes through in determining whether to adopt a new management technique. First comes an AWARENESS stage in which the library has access to information about the innovation. Then comes a DECISION-MAKING stage during which the library evaluates the technique with its local situation in mind. If the decision is in favor of adopting and using the innovation, an IMPLEMENTATION stage occurs. Finally, another decision is made, based on the library's satisfaction with using the new technique. The decision at this point is whether to CONTINUE using the technique in the future.

Question # 17 on the next page represents an attempt to discover where your library stands with respect to the adoption process. The stages are progressive; that is, each library will have passed through an earlier stage before arriving at a later one. In order to identify the stage that your library is currently in, it will be necessary to scan each of the stages in question # 17, along with their accompanying descriptions.

17. With regard to the Public Library Association's suggested Planning Process, at which of the following stages is your library? (Statements beneath each stage provide additional information.) Please select one of the four stages listed below by circling its corresponding number (Circle **ONE** number only). Next place a checkmark beside the statement that best describes your library's current situation.

1 **Awareness Stage** (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ NOT AWARE (Until now, we have never heard of the PLA Planning manuals)

_____ Aware, but NOT INTERESTED in learning more about the Planning Process

_____ Aware and INTERESTED in learning more about the Planning Process

2 **Decision Stage** (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ Decided NOT TO ADOPT AND USE the Planning Process

_____ Decided TO ADOPT AND USE the Planning Process

3 **Adoption/Implementation Stage** (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ NOT SATISFIED after using the Planning Process

_____ SATISFIED after using the Planning Process

_____ Currently using the Planning process; TOO EARLY TO ASSESS SATISFACTION

4 **Continuance Stage** (If you circled this number, place a checkmark beside ONE of the statements below)

_____ After completing one planning cycle, we have decided TO CONTINUE TO USE the Planning Process (either manual) when it is time to start working on our next long range plan

_____ After completing one planning cycle, we have decided NOT TO USE (either the first or the revised) planning manual a second time.

5 **Other Stage** (Please describe)

PART III. **Your Library's Reaction to the Planning Manuals.** The items in this section are multiple choice. Please circle the number to the left of the most appropriate response. Circle **ONE** number only for each question.

18. When did your library **first become aware** of the Public Library Association's planning and evaluation manuals?

    0 not applicable, we were not aware of the manuals

    1 before 1980

    2 between 1980 and 1983

    3 between 1984 and 1986

    4 between 1987 and 1989

    5 don' t know

19. When did your library **begin using the planning manuals** to develop a written long range plan?

    0 not applicable, we are not using either of the manuals

    1 between 1980 and 1983

    2 between 1984 and 1986

    3 between 1987 and 1989

    4 we intend to use the planning and role setting manual in the near future

    5 don't know

20. Which of the following best describes **how satisfied your library was with the first planning manual** (APP)?

    0 not applicable, we have not used this manual

    1 very satisfied

    2 satisfied

    3 no opinion

    4 unsatisfied

    5 very unsatisfied

21. Which of the following best describes **how satisfied your library was/is with the second planning manual** (PRSM)? (Circle **ONE** number only.)

0 not applicable, we have not used this manual

1 very satisfied

2 satisfied

3 no opinion

4 unsatisfied

5 very unsatisfied

22. If your library has no interest in the planning manuals, OR has evaluated the planning manuals and reached a decision about them, please tell us briefly **the reason(s) for your lack of interest, or for your decision.**

23. Have you discussed the planning manuals with other librarians who have used them in their libraries?

1 No 2 Yes (If so, please briefly indicate what their reaction to using the manuals was)

24. If you have used the planning and role setting manual, please indicate the role or roles that you established for your library. **(Circle as many numbers as are appropriate.)**

0 not applicable, we have not used the manual

1 Community Activities Center

2 Community Information Center

3 Formal Education Support Center

4 Independent Learning Center

5 Popular Materials Center

6 Preschooler's Door to Learning

7 Reference Library

8 Research Center

9 Other (please describe)

PART IV. **Background Information.** This final section requests several items of information about you and your library.

25. Is your library an institutional member of any of the following associations?

American Library Association	1	No	2	Yes
Public Library Association	1	No	2	Yes
Your State Library Association	1	No	2	Yes

26. Is your library a member of a regional system or library network that **provides continuing education opportunities** to its members?

1 No 2 Yes

27. What is the total population served by your library? _____

28. For how many years have you been this library's director?

1 3 years or less

2 4-6 years

3 7-9 years

4 10-12 years

5 13-15 years

6 over 15 years

29. Which ONE of the following best describes your educational level:

1 high school diploma

2 some college

3 bachelor's degree

4 MLS

5 master's degree, but not in library science

6 MLS, plus an additional master's or specialist degree

7 other (please specify) _____

30. How many library conferences, workshops, association meetings, etc. have you attended in the past 12 months?

(estimate if necessary) _____

31. How many library association committees have you served on in the past three years?

(estimate if necessary) _____

32. Which of the following professional journals do you read on a regular basis? **(Please circle as many as apply.)**

1 Library Journal

2 Public Libraries

3 American Libraries

4 Wilson Library Bulletin

5 Public Library Quarterly

6 School Library Journal

7 our state library association's publications

8 others (please specify) _____

Thank you very much for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed, stamped envelope to:

Verna L. Pungitore
Indiana University
School of Library and Information Science
Bloomington, Indiana 47405

33. You are invited to use the space below or the reverse side of this sheet for comments.

APPENDIX C: LIBRARY DIRECTOR FOLLOW-UP LETTER

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY
AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-2018 (Administration)
(812) 855-5113 (Faculty)

August 3, 1989

Dear Public Library Director:

Enclosed is a duplicate copy of a questionnaire that we sent to your library several weeks ago. To date we have not received your response.

The questionnaire is part of a nationwide study of small and medium-sized public libraries that is being funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The study concerns the extent to which smaller libraries are aware of and are using the planning and role setting process developed by the Public Library Association.

It is just as important to our study to know about the libraries that are unaware of the PLA planning process or have decided that its use is not appropriate, as it is to know about those libraries that have used it or are considering its use. If you did not return the questionnaire when it was first sent to you because you felt it did not apply to your library, I hope you will reconsider.

As a former public library director, I know how annoying it is to be asked to take time out of a very busy schedule to fill out a seemingly irrelevant questionnaire. I would not be making this request a second time if your library's participation in the survey were not absolutely essential.

Yours is one of a limited number of public libraries in your state that were randomly selected in order to develop a composite, state-by-state picture of the impact, if any, that the PLA planning process has had on smaller libraries. One of the things we hope the study will tell us is how well the needs of smaller community libraries are currently being addressed by those in leadership positions on the state and national level.

We would very much appreciate your completing the questionnaire and returning it at your earliest convenience. If you have misplaced the stamped, self-addressed envelope that was included in the earlier mailing, please return the questionnaire to

Verna L. Pungitore
Indiana University
School of Library and Information Science
Bloomington, IN 47405

Thank you for your courtesy.

Sincerely,

Verna L. Pungitore
Project Director